# POST SEPTEMBER 11...

# AMERICANS' QUESTIONS ABOUT ISLAM

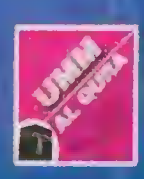
BY

SALAH AL-SAWY

# تساؤلات الأمريكان حول الإسلام

## بعد انفجارات الحادى عشر من سبتمبر

د. صلاح الصاوى



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### بعد انفجارات الحادي عشر من سبتمبر

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**Umm Al-Qura**

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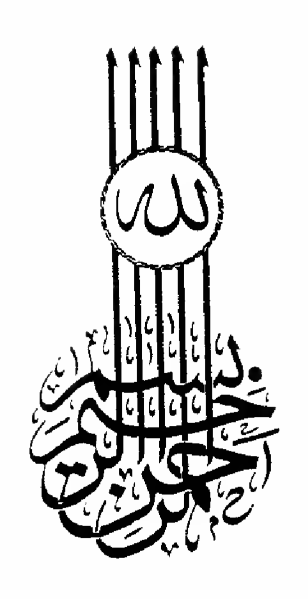


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# *INTRODUCTION*

All praise be to Allah, and may His Mercy and Peace be upon the Messenger of Allah, his family, his Companions, and all those who follow his guidance.

Dialogue is still considered to be the most civilized means of communication between different civilizations and cultures. Through dialogue, correct information reaches others, penetrating their hearts and minds. It establishes evidence, eradicates doubt, and allows people to see issues in light of the plain facts, free from distortion, exaggeration, or fabrication.

This book deals with questions related to various fields and numerous topics. As a whole, however, these questions demonstrate the extent to which ignorance and distortion have been woven against Islam by mass media and prejudiced studies. At the same time, they are also a reflection of the distorted image, pictured in the minds of this country's people, with regard to Islam's history, civilization and community.

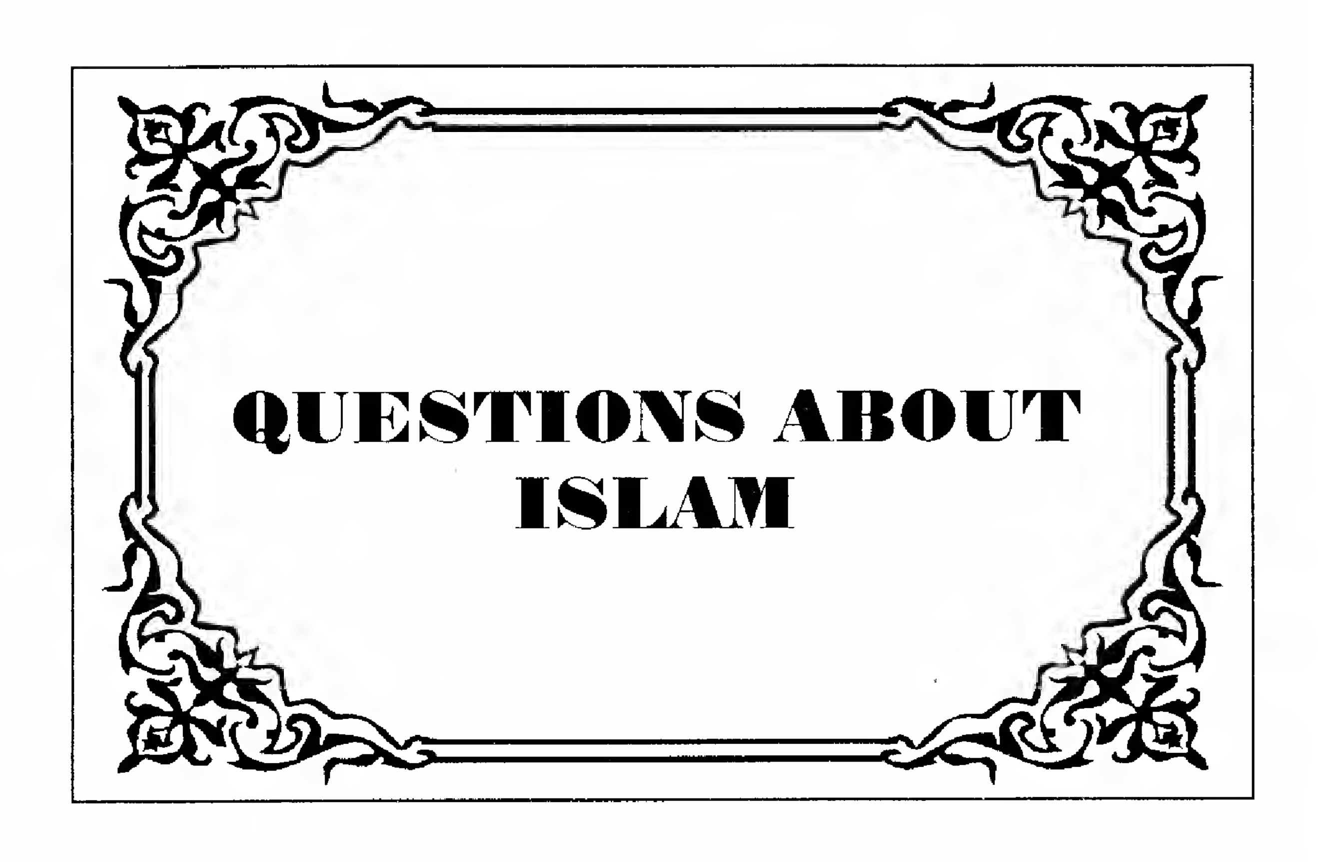
These questions are not the product of mere imagination. On the contrary they are taken from an actual survey conducted by some institutions of public opinion in this country based on recurring questions stemming from the events of September the eleventh. These events caused Islam with its doctrines, laws, and history to be brought under the scrutiny of many groups, cultural as well as non-cultural, in Western countries in general, and in this country specifically.

I ask Allah to make these pages beneficial, reaching both the heart and mind of the reader. May Allah accept this effort so as to exonerate me from the sin of concealing or neglecting the obligation to convey knowledge. I pray to You my Lord, for it is You who is Able to do all things, and it is only Your reward that I seek. You are the Guide to the Right Way.

*Salah Al-Sawy*

*Maryland*

**19-2-1423**



# QUESTIONS ABOUT ISLAM

## 1. What is Islam and how does one become a Muslim?

The origin of the word 'Islam' is derived from the Arabic word for submission to Allah the Exalted. This entails submission to Allah's Oneness [in His Lordship, His right to be worshipped and obeyed, and in His most perfect names and attributes] as it also entails following His messengers. In this respect, Islam is the same religion that was preached by all of the prophets. No prophet was sent by Allah except to order his people, "Associate none in worship with Allah and obey me in what I convey unto you from Him." Thus, this is the general precept of Islam with which all messengers were sent. Allah, the Exalted, says:

﴿ وَمَآ أَرْسَلْنَا مِن قَبْلِكَ مِن رَّسُولٍ إِلَّا نُوحِىٓ إِلَيْهِ أَنَّهُۥ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّآ أَنَا۠ فَٱعْبُدُونِ ﴿٢٥﴾ ﴾ ( الأنبياء : ٢٥ )

**And We did not send any Messenger before you (O Muhammad) but We inspired him (saying, "*Lâ ilâha illa Ana* (none has the right to be worshipped but I (Allah)), so worship Me (Alone and none else.)**

**(Al-Anbiyâ', 21:25)**

He also says:

﴿ قُلْ يَٰٓأَهْلَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ تَعَالَوْا۟ إِلَىٰ كَلِمَةٍ سَوَآءٍۭ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ أَلَّا نَعْبُدَ إِلَّا ٱللَّهَ وَلَا نُشْرِكَ بِهِۦ شَيْـًٔا وَلَا يَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُنَا بَعْضًا أَرْبَابًا مِّن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ فَإِن تَوَلَّوْا۟ فَقُولُوا۟ ٱشْهَدُوا۟ بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿٦٤﴾ ﴾ ( آل عمران : ٦٤)

**Say (O Muhammad), "O people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians), Come to a word that is just between us and you, that we worship none but Allah, and that we associate no partners with Him, and that none of us shall take others as lords besides Allah." Then, if they turn away, say, " Bear witness that we are Muslims".**

**(Âl-'Imrân, 3:64)**

Likewise, the religion of Islam with which the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was sent, calls for the same principles, i.e. worshipping Allah alone, associating no partners with Him, and following all that the Prophet (peace be upon him) conveyed regarding religion. The message with which he was sent abrogated all previous messages, and thus Allah accepts no religion other than Islam. Allah, the Exalted says:

﴿ إِنَّ ٱلدِّينَ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ ٱلْإِسْلَٰمُ ﴾

( آل عمران : ١٩)

**Truly, the religion with Allah is Islam. (Âl-'Imrân, 3:19)**

He also says:

﴿ وَمَن يَبْتَغِ غَيْرَ ٱلْإِسْلَٰمِ دِينًا فَلَن يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ وَهُوَ فِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ مِنَ ٱلْخَٰسِرِينَ ﴿٨٥﴾ ﴾ ( آل عمران :٨٥ )

**And whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it will never be accepted of him, and in the Hereafter he will be one of the losers. (Âl-'Imrân, 3:85)**

One embraces Islam by testifying [with absolute faith and surety] that there is no god but Allah, and that Muhammad (peace be upon him) is His messenger. He must also renounce any religion other than Islam. There are five pillars to Islam:

1. Testifying that there is No god but Allah
2. Performing the prayer
3. Fasting (during the month of *Ramadhân*
4. Paying *Zakâh* (Obligatory Charity)
5. Performing *Hajj* if one has the means.

## 2. What is the difference between what Muslims do and what Islam calls for?

Islam encompasses all that Allah revealed to His Messenger, Muhammad (peace be upon him), including both its *sharî'ah* (Islamic law) and its doctrines, and it is Allah Who is the protector and preserver of this religion. As for Muslims

however, they are mere human beings, some of whom transgress against their own selves, others who follow a middle course, and still others who are, by Allah's leave, foremost in good deeds. Muslims' actions cannot be taken as evidence against Islam, for none after the Prophet (peace be upon him) is without sin. Rather, those who came after him vary in their adherence to his teachings, just as followers of all religions vary in their adherence to their laws and doctrines.

In the same way, the acts of Christians are neither proof against Christ (peace be upon him) nor against the true Christianity as it was before its distortion or abrogation. Even today, the corruption that we see in some of the clergy is not to be held against the church itself, as long as the church renounces such acts and does not condone them. Moreover, the reports of deviance and sexual scandal which we are hearing daily in the news are no reflection of Christianity in its true form, nor of Christ and his original followers, Rather, it is they themselves who are the embodiment of true Christianity.

## 3. Why should one be an Arab and learn the Arabic language to be a Muslim?

It is not true that one must be an Arab to become a Muslim. No one from among the Muslims has ever made such a claim. And how could they make such a claim when Islam is the Mercy of Allah for all creation?

﴿ قُلْ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ إِنِّى رَسُولُ ٱللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ جَمِيعًا ﴾

( الأعراف : ١٥٨ )

**Say (O Muhammad): O mankind! Verily, I am sent to you all as the Messenger of Allah. (Al-A'râf, 7:158)**

﴿ وَمَآ أَرْسَلْنَٰكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٠٧﴾ ﴾

( الأنبياء : ١٠٧ )

**And We have not sent you (O Muhammad) except as a mercy for the *'Âlamîn* (mankind, jinn and all that exists). (Al-Anbiyâ', 21:107)**

The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said, ***"Verily, every prophet was sent especially to his own people, but I was sent to all mankind".*** At that time, innumerable Persians and Romans embraced Islam just as today, many Americans and Europeans are turning to Islam. It was never ordained that they must wear Arabian clothes or have Arabian nationality to be Muslims. However, every Muslim must learn at least the minimum amount of the Arabic which enables him to perform prayer. The more one learns the better it is for him, as it enables him to acquire Islamic knowledge from its original sources.

## 4-Why do Muslims worship Allah and not the Lord?

The Lord and God are synonymous in meaning. Allah, the Exalted, says:

﴿ ذَٰلِكُمُ ٱللَّهُ رَبُّكُمْ ۖ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۖ خَٰلِقُ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ فَٱعْبُدُوهُ ۚ
وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ وَكِيلٌ ﴿١٠٢﴾ ﴾ ( الأنعام : ١٠٢ )

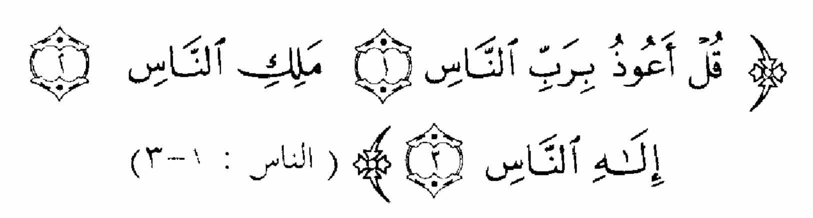
**Such is Allah, your Lord! *Lâ ilâha illa Huwa* (there is no God besides Him), the Creator of all things. So worship Him (Alone), and He is the *Wakîl* (Trustee, Disposer of affairs, Guardian, etc.) over all things'**

**(Al-An'âm, 6:102).**

Allah, the Exalted, also says:

﴿ وَمَا ٱخْتَلَفْتُمْ فِيهِ مِن شَىْءٍ فَحُكْمُهُۥٓ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمُ ٱللَّهُ رَبِّى
عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَإِلَيْهِ أُنِيبُ ﴿١٠﴾ ﴾ ( الشورى : ١٠ )

**And in whatsoever you differ, the decision thereof is with Allah (He is the ruling Judge). (And say O Muhammad to these polytheists:) Such is Allah, my Lord in Whom I put my trust, and to Him I turn in all of my affairs and in repentance' (Ash-Shûrâ, 42:10).**



**Say: I seek refuge with (Allah) the Lord of mankind, The King of mankind, The *Ilâh* (God) of mankind.**

**(An-Nâs, 114:1-3)**

Verily, Allah has ninety-nine names: whosoever learns them by heart[1] will enter Paradise. In fact, Allah's names exceed this number. Multiplicity of names however, does not prove the existence of multiple gods. Rather, it implies the Majesty of His Face and the Exaltedness of His Being and Sovereignty, Glorified be He.

## 5. What do Muslims mean by the words *sharî'ah* (Islamic law) and *fiqh*? Is there a difference between the two?

*Sharî'ah* originally refers to all that Allah ordained for His creation concerning religion, whether it be related to acts of worship, transactions, or ethical matters. Later however, scholars began to use the term specifically to refer to laws concerning actions as opposed to those referring to beliefs.

Likewise, *fiqh* was originally a term that encompassed all Islamic rulings whether they are related to deeds or beliefs.

[1] Learning Allah's names by heart entails believing that Allah has some unique names which belong only to Him such as Allah's being the Exalted , the One, The All-Able. Also, some of His names refer to attributes, which we should try to incorporate in our selves such as The Most-Generous, The Most Merciful, the Forgiving.

According to this meaning, Abû Hanîfah wrote his book on theology, entitled Al-fiqh Al-Akbar. Other scholars, however, used the term *fiqh* to refer to rulings dealing with actions according to Islamic law, in contrast to rulings dealing with beliefs.

Thus, according to the scholars, *sharî'ah* and *fiqh* are synonymous. In their original meanings, they are both comprehensive terms referring to all Islamic rulings, just as in their technical meanings they both refer specifically to Islamic jurisprudence as it is related to actions, in contrast to that which deals with beliefs.

Some contemporary scholars however, differentiated between the two terms. They used *sharî'ah* to refer to clear-cut definitive rulings, and *fiqh* to refer to speculative rulings and rulings based on *ijtihâd* (personal reasoning). In either case, these are merely semantic differences that have emerged after the classification of *sharî'ah* into definitive and speculative jurisprudence. Thus, both *fiqh* and *sharî'ah* can be used to refer to Islamic jurisprudence as a whole, and sharî'ah can be used to specify definitive rulings in contrast to speculative rulings, which then are referred to as *fiqh*.

## 6. What are the rights prescribed by Islam for all human beings?

*Sharî'ah* (Islamic law) calls for the preservation of five entities. All its doctrines and orders revolve around protecting

and safeguarding them. They are protecting **one's religion, life, mind, honor, and wealth.** These five totalities of existence are the main concern of the rulings of *sharî'ah*.

1. *Sharî'ah* (Islamic law) calls for the preservation of one's **religion**, and it gave people the right to choose their religion when it stated,

﴿ لَآ إِكۡرَاهَ فِي ٱلدِّينِۖ قَد تَّبَيَّنَ ٱلرُّشۡدُ مِنَ ٱلۡغَيِّۚ ﴾

( البقرة : ٢٥٦)

**There is no compulsion in religion. Verily, the Right Path has become distinct from the wrong path.**

**(Al-Baqarah, 2:256)**

This verse was revealed when some of the inhabitants of Madinah who embraced Islam wanted to force their Jewish children to embrace Islam as well. One would say, "O Messenger of Allah! How can I witness a part of me (my son) entering Hellfire?" In spite of everything the orders were clear and decisive that there is no compulsion in religion. Moreover, *sharî'ah* protects one's right to choose his religion by making it obligatory for Muslims to fight those who violate this right and deny others their right to choose.

﴿ وَقَٰتِلُوهُمۡ حَتَّىٰ لَا تَكُونَ فِتۡنَةٞ وَيَكُونَ ٱلدِّينُ كُلُّهُۥ لِلَّهِۚ ﴾

( الأنفال : ٣٩)

**And fight them until there is no more *fitnah* (disbelief and polytheism: i.e. worshipping others besides Allah) and the religion (worship) will all be for Allah Alone (in the whole of the world). (Al-Anfâl, 8:39)**

It also protects the right of non-Muslims living within the Islamic community to practice the religion of their choice. It gives them the freedom to practice their rituals and to judge according to their rulings concerning personal laws[1]. This, in itself is a great matter that has not yet been applied by the most civilized countries calling for human rights.

The sanctity of religion is also protected, as *sharî'ah* has declared the duty of enjoining what is righteous and forbidding what is evil to be obligatory. In this way, it prevented those who do mischief in the land and violate the sacred things of Allah. It made the major duty of a nation to protect religion according to its fundamental principles and all that which was agreed upon by the Pious Predecessors of this nation. There are many lots of rulings. which aim at protecting religion.

2. *Sharî'ah* protects the individual's **life** by declaring manslaughter and murder to be unlawful, and enforcing this legislation with deterrent sentences. This protection of human life does not begin at birth; rather it begins even before that when the child is still in his mother's womb, by

[1] Personal laws relate to marriage, divorce, child custody and other family issues.

declaring abortion to be a punishable crime.[1] *Sharî'ah* is also responsible for the daily needs of people including their food, clothing, and medical treatment. It declared the provision for these needs to be an obligation for which the whole nation would be held accountable if some in the community were left in need. *Sharî'ah* protects the self as it renders committing suicide unlawful punishable by eternal abode in Hellfire. These are some of the many rulings legislated to protect the life of the individual.

3. *Sharî'ah* protects one's **wealth** by urging people to invest rather than hoarding their money. *Sharî'ah* also prohibits taking other's money without right and declared that no one has any right over his brother's money except that which was given with consent. It prescribed penalties for theft and armed robbery. There are also penalties for some acts that are left to the discretion of the authorities of Islamic countries, including acts that constitute any sort of assault on one's wealth. Similarly, there are many other rulings, which aim at protecting one's wealth.

4. *Sharî'ah* protects one's **mind** by declaring alcoholic drinks and all other kinds of intoxicants unlawful. It is not only drinking, but selling and buying such substances which are also prohibited. There are ten people who deal in alcoholic drinks who are cursed according to *Sharî'ah* including the provider, the drinker, the seller, the buyer,

[1] See question 98 for more details regarding Islam's view of abortion.

the carrier, and the one for whom it is carried, etc. *Sharî'ah* also protects one's mind as it ordains the prescribed and the reinforcing penalties to restrain those who cannot be motivated by their own religion and morals.

5. *Sharî'ah* protects one's **honor** and posterity by prohibiting adultery and all kinds of perversion. It prohibits and enforces heavy punishments for those who slander chaste women, accusing them of such crimes without evidence and propagating (the crime of) illegal sexual intercourse in the community. It also prevents the means for evil by urging and facilitating marriage. It prohibits women from adorning themselves when in the presence of men other than their near relatives, just as it also prohibits dissolute intermingling, being alone with women/men who are lawful to be married. There are many rulings, which aim at protecting one's chastity and posterity.

The one who closely examines these rulings finds that they achieve these five objectives in the short run, and protect them in the long run. These five elements play an important role in *ijtihâd* (personal reasoning) and deduction, but if there appeared to be opposition between a deduction and one of the five main elements then the priority goes to the main five elements. *Sharî'ah* did not only deem these main elements to be personal rights but elevated them to be religious duties, and moreover, they became among the sacred aspects of life that are not to be violated.

**7. Muslims living at the United States claim that they have the same rights as other Americans. How can they say so while they are new immigrants and did not participate in building this country with others?**

You know better about your country's rules and about what the whole world has agreed upon under such banners of democracy, equality, and citizenship rights. Countries have agreed that those people who are naturalized have the same rights as those who were born in that country. There are no differences except in some political rights. which entail some special conditions.

Nationality is never conferred upon a resident of this country except after a certain period of time has passed during which his personal life, behavior, compliance with laws, and especially his finances are scrutinized. Naturally he must have done something useful for the country or have the potential to do something useful, during that period, in order to deserve its nationality.

From another point of view, however, this community was built by the hands of immigrants. It has benefited from the experiences and abilities of people from around the world to build its contemporary civilization. Higher education students are the best example of this point. This country solicits the best students in different fields to solve scientific problems with their help. They are trained in techniques that most probably are not available in their own societies. Thus, this country becomes the

sole beneficiary of their knowledge and experience. That is because their countries have no prior knowledge of the experiences they have gained nor of the techniques they have been accustomed to use, and thus if they do choose to return to their countries, they will be nothing more than ordinary employees.

### 8. Everything that is done or believed in by Muslims is very strange for us (the Americans): the way they eat, their clothing, their speech, their doctrines, their laws...all are very strange for a Christian or Jewish country!

What do you mean by the word strange? Is it just being different from the rest of the society concerning these matters? If such peculiarities exist – and I doubt they exist to the extent implied by the question- they certainly are not as strange as you make out. Muslims are human beings like the rest of mankind, but the differences in some daily matters is a natural result of the difference in religion. Muslims, for example, do not drink alcohol, eat pork, have mistresses, or make public displays of affection with their wives. They do not go to nightclubs, indulge in usurious interest on money, or gamble. Muslim women are ordered to cover their bodies and do not to take men as boyfriends. Whoever disobeys these things is considered a sinner and deserves the Wrath and Anger of Allah, the Exalted. Practicing Muslims are just ordinary people who are acting in accordance to the rulings and laws of their religion. They must not and cannot disobey it, so what is the problem?

In what way does a Muslim's obedience to the laws of Islam make a problem for the American society? Aren't his religious practices a private affair that does not concern anyone else. Don't American citizens, whether Muslim or non-Muslim, have the right to conduct their personal affairs the way they like as long as they do not infringe on the rights or freedom of others? Isn't America's claim to fame that the American society stands for personal freedom and that respect of privacy is paramount? Why then do they not afford Muslims the freedom to conduct their affairs as they see fit? As I have said before, t is just a matter of personal affairs that have nothing whatsoever to do with others.

Generally, Muslims conduct their personal affairs related to eating, drinking, and dress codes following the guidance of the Messenger (peace be upon him). The Islamic *sharî'ah* is a comprehensive code which covers all aspects of life whether one knows these laws or not, or follows them or not. Some Muslims may be mistaken as to the difference between customs and what is an Islamic practice causing them to become really strict about some things that the people of knowledge disapprove of. This is only the fault of the individual and has nothing to do with *sharî'ah.*

It is strange that some Americans consider the conduct of Satan worshippers to be normal and it does not find anything odd about it. They consider gays and lesbians normal, and they even pass legislation declaring its legality. Some activists for these groups have called for the right to incorporate their sexual

tendencies into the social and psychological fabric of the American society so that gays are accepted on all levels of social and public life. To this end, they prepare many programs and long seminars on television that are listened to by millions of people. And after all that, the American public is annoyed by the personal practices of Muslims who are committed to following their religion by trying to do righteous deeds and follow in the footsteps of the Messenger (peace be upon him)?!!!

As for this country's Christianity or Judaism, it is well known that this country openly declares its secularism and separates between religion and state seeing all religious sects as equal in their citizenship rights. So, what is strange is the use of the term 'religious society' when referring to American society.

## 9. What is the difference between Extremism and Fundamentalism?

Extremism in the Arabic language is the opposite of moderation and reasonability. In this way it covers both, negligence and exaggeration. Islam is based on taking a middle course, and so exaggeration in understanding or following it is one end of the two extremes. Likewise negligence is considered to be the other extreme. This is the secular Extremism that has been ignored by so many people. This kind has a destructive influence on societies that is not less than the first kind. Many contemporary writers have ignored this kind of Extremism and limited themselves to writing about that which exaggerates. I

think the reason is that the other kind does not arouse the society's concern . After all, who cares if a Muslim doesn't pray, except another Muslim? (Perhaps America could prove the existence of its Open, Pluralistic society by legislating laws that all Muslims must pray!)

It is clear from the way the question was asked that the extremity meant here is that of exaggeration. Exceeding the limits in religion, as it is well known, is forbidden. The Prophet (peace be upon him) warned against it and explained that it is an ailment, which all communities suffer from.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, ***"Beware of exceeding the limits in your religion. For indeed what has destroyed the nations before you was exceeding the limit in religion."***

The Prophet (peace be upon him) forbade those of his Companions who wanted to dedicate themselves fully to the worship of Allah. Some wanted to observe Fasting all days without any break, others wanted to spend their whole nights in offering prayers without sleep, and some wanted to renounce marriage completely. He explained to them that doing so is against his teachings and traditions.

As we have said before, the opposite of Extremism is moderation and reasonableness, which is the course of the Islamic religion. Allah, the Exalted, says,

﴿ وَكَذَٰلِكَ جَعَلْنَٰكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِّتَكُونُوا۟ شُهَدَآءَ عَلَى ٱلنَّاسِ وَيَكُونَ ٱلرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا ﴾ (البقرة :١٤٣)

**Thus We have made you (true Muslims - real believers of Islamic Monotheism, true followers of Prophet Muhammad and his *Sunnah* (legal ways)), a *Wasat* [balanced and just] nation, that you may be witnesses over mankind and the Messenger (Muhammad) be a witness over you. (Al-Baqarah, 2:143)**

The fundamentals of *fiqh* in Islamic terminology is one of the most important sciences of *sharî'ah* (Islamic law). It is the science that teaches the Jurist the rules, which enable him to deduct rulings based on proofs and prevents him from erring while deducting. *Fiqh* is one of the valuable sciences of *sharî'ah*. In some aspects it is similar to Logic whose learners state that it keeps the mind from going astray in thinking.

So there is a big difference between Extremism and Fundamentalism. The distance between both is like that between the East and the West. The relation that joins them together is that of contradiction because Extremism is the result of misconception while learning the fundamentals keeps one from this misconception and, prevents Extremism and eradicates it.

## 10. Do you have anything called Islamic art, habits, and customs?

Islamic art is deeply rooted. Every kind of art known to the world could be Islamic if restrained with moral restrictions and does not lead to moral and social destruction. There is literature in the forms of poetry and prose. There are songs and *terza rima*. There are various forms of novels, Islamic architecture, and all sorts of other fine arts recognized world over that neither destroy morals nor religion. On the other hand, without doubt, dancing could never be considered an Islamic art, nor could Augury, soothsaying, witchcraft, or sorcery.

Every nation has its own habits and customs and Muslims are included in this. Islamic traditions include what is right and what is wrong, what can be praised and what can be dispraised. They are like the thermometer that reflects the degree of Faith in societies. Right and praised traditions are found in rightly guided Islamic nations. But when we see good deeds turning into evil and evil deeds turning into good, then we are in a state of Faith deterioration. This happens when the wrong concepts and evil behaviors prevail and as a result wrongful traditions and dispraised habits are spread.

Indeed, the right tradition is one of the sources of deduction in *sharî'ah*, and it is taught as a branch of 'The Principles of Islamic Jurisprudence.' It is also common to hear students of this science saying such things as: habits are judging, tradition is followed, traditions are like stipulated

conditions, and legal opinions change according to traditions, time and place. Muslim scientists have carried out their own researches concerning tradition and its influence on deducting legal opinions. I do not think that you can find any greater and loftier nation similar to ours.

## 11. Why do you find lots of poor Muslims while you are ordered to pay one fortieth of your property as Zakâh?

There are lots of reasons that led to that, among which are:

- Some Muslims fall short in fulfilling this obligation and prevent what Allah has made obligatory on them.
- Mismanagement and misdistribution of the Zakâh (obligatory charity). This stemmed from most Islamic countries neglecting to follow *sharî'ah.* Basically, in Islamic communities the state is responsible for collecting Zakâh. Public organizations have to collect it from people and pay it to the needy. The state is more capable of organizing such things. But as it is well known, *sharî'ah* has not been practiced for more than a hundred years now throughout the Islamic world.

From this way we can see that the reasons behind widespread poverty are either in collecting or distributing Zakâh (obligatory charity). Allah, the Exalted and Ever Majestic promised those who follow the conduct of *sharî'ah,* a comfortable and easy life.

Allah, the Exalted, says,

﴿ وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ أَقَامُوا۟ ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةَ وَٱلْإِنجِيلَ وَمَآ أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِم مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ لَأَكَلُوا۟ مِن فَوْقِهِمْ وَمِن تَحْتِ أَرْجُلِهِم ﴾ (المائدة :٦٦)

**And if only they had acted according to the Taurât (Torah), the Injeel (Gospel), and what has (now) been sent down to them from their Lord (the Qur'ân), they would surely have gotten provision from above them and from underneath their feet (Al-Mâ'idah, 5:66)**

Allah, the Exalted, also says,

﴿ وَأَلَّوِ ٱسْتَقَـٰمُوا۟ عَلَى ٱلطَّرِيقَةِ لَأَسْقَيْنَـٰهُم مَّآءً غَدَقًا ﴿١٦﴾ لِّنَفْتِنَهُمْ فِيهِ ﴾

(الجن :١٦-١٧)

**If they (non-Muslims) had believed in Allah, and went on the Right Way (i.e. Islam) We should surely have bestowed on them water (rain) in abundance that We might try them thereby. (Al-Jinn, 72:16-17)**

Allah promised drought to those who forbid paying Zakâh. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, ***"Verily, those who forbid paying Zakâh are only forbidding rain to fall from the sky. If not for their livestock, they would not have been rained on (at all)".***

## 12. If you say that Islam gives freedom of religion, so why do you have to be restrained by certain things to be a Muslim?

'Freedom' is in embracing a religion. Non-Muslims have every right to choose whichever religion they wish, as long as they are responsible for their choice. If one chooses to be a Muslim, then he has to follow the Islamic laws. Exactly like when you tell someone: you have the right to accept the American citizenship or refuse it. If you accept, then you would be subject to the American law, and it will be enforced upon you.

From another point of view, what a strange question this is! Does freedom mean leaving every restriction and abandoning every rule? Don't the people in America abide by the law and the constitution? Don't they follow the traffic signals, conform to the laws of taxes, emigration and nationality? Is there a system in this world with no restrictions? Is there any religion in this world with no lawful and unlawful things? I think that the answer is clear and that the question is only meant to distort the facts.

## 13. Why is Islam so hard that one has to offer five prayers a day?

There are no hardships as you imagine. Theoretically, the time spent in these five prayers does not exceed an hour throughout all the day and night. It is not an obligation that has

to be offered in a mosque, but the whole earth is purified and fit as a place for prayer. Only the graveyard and the privy are excluded from being fit for prayer. So once prayer is established, any place would be lawful to offer it. It is not an obligation to offer it in a mosque except in the case of *Jumu'ah* (Friday) Prayer. Not to mention the other licenses of combining two prayers and shortening the prayer, which were made lawful when the necessity arises. The traveler can shorten and combine the prayers. Thus, the four- *rak'ah* (unit of prayer) prayer would be only two *rak'ahs*. Combining two prayers together makes them offered at three times throughout the day. Women who are menstruating and the one in post childbirth bleeding (puerperal period) are not to observe Fast or offer prayers during such periods.

From the believer's point of view, that which you see as hardship is in fact a means of peace and happiness. In their eyes, it is better than the worldly matters that the other people in society enjoy. Trivial, worldly pursuits are seen as vain things, which people strive for who have no lofty aims in life. The Prophet (peace be upon him) used to say, ***"Prayer is made the delight of my eye"***. He also used to say,***"O Bilâl! Relieve us with it (the announcement of prayer)"***.

## 14. If Islam is the religion of ease, why should Muslims starve themselves during the month of Ramadhân?

Observing Fast doesn't mean starving oneself. On the contrary it can be a means to achieve good health. Haven't

you heard physicians say that the stomach is the source of all diseases, and that the son of Âdam (Adam, peace be upon him) never filled a utensil worse than his stomach? These were the words of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) who came to teach us fourteen centuries ago. Don't you follow the latest researches stating the medical benefits of observing Fast? It is the researches that came from your labs by the hands of your doctors.

A person is forbidden from fasting if he is ill or suffering from old age. The principles of *sharî'ah* (Islamic law) state that travel, illness, and senility are among the excuses to break one's Fast. It is not an act of obedience to Allah to observe Fast while traveling. Menstruation and puerperal blood are among the excuses not to observe Fast or Prayer. If the menstruating woman or the woman during her puerperal period observed Fast or Prayer, she is sinful and what she did is considered void. (The general rule says, 'After hardship there is relief')..It is so strange that such words come from a nation whose majority are starving themselves on diets to avoid being overweight. If it became an injunction on them to follow fad diets and do strenuous workouts at the gym, they would complain of the severity of such laws!

## 15. Why is it forbidden for Muslims to drink alcoholic drinks and eat pork?

At the beginning, I would like to say that pork is also forbidden in Christian law. Prevalence in eating it does not

reflect the true teachings of Christ (peace be upon him) as revealed to him by Allah. The prohibition of eating pork is common between Muslims, Christians and Jews. To be sure of that ask those sincere among your own people. You will believe what we are saying when Christ returns at the end of time, breaks the cross and kills the pig.

It has not been mentioned in *sharî'ah* (Islamic law) the reasons for the prohibition of eating pork as it also doesn't mention the reasons behind the prohibition of alcoholic drinks and gambling. It goes under the general prohibition of all *Khabâ'ith* (all evil and unlawful things), from which Allah forbade this nation. Allah, the Exalted, says:

﴿ وَيُحِلُّ لَهُمُ ٱلطَّيِّبَٰتِ وَيُحَرِّمُ عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلْخَبَٰٓئِثَ ﴾

(الأعراف :١٥٧)

**He allows them as lawful *At-Tayyibât* (i.e. all good and lawful) as regards things, deeds, beliefs, persons, foods, etc.), and prohibits them as unlawful *Al-Khabâ'ith* (i.e. all evil and unlawful as regards things, deeds, beliefs, persons, foods, etc.). (Al-A'râf, 7:157)**

***Khabâ'ith*** is all that destroys human life whether it is health, wealth, or morals. Much has been discovered as medical research has found that pork carries in it the origin of a dangerous worm that is transmitted to the person eating it. It breeds not only in a person's intestines, which can not cured

but also it aims at the heart and from it to the muscles. Especially in the chest, ribs, larynx, diaphragm...etc. Its latent buds stay for years in the body. This doesn't mean that if we solve the problem of this worm it would become lawful, for its prohibition was not only for that reason. Science might discover another reason in the future as it has discovered this worm. Supposing that these futuristic discoveries occurred in some civilized nations, what about the rest of the world? Those with different cultures, minds, abilities, and means, what are they going to do? Islamic doctrines, which embody the Last word of Allah, have to be general so as to cover all nations in various cases and circumstances.

As for drinking alcoholic drinks, you already know its effects on humanity. You should remember that the United States have tried banning drinking. It issued a law and kept fighting for fifteen years but finally it failed. All wise people have agreed on the dangers of alcoholic drinks and on its being worse for the health than smoking. They wish to be relieved of its evils for just one day. This is a point counted for Islam and not against it.

## 16. Does not worshipping the *Ka'abah* and the Black Stone by Muslims make them polytheists?

Muslims worship neither the *Ka'abah* nor the Black Stone, they only worship Allah. When they circumambulate round the *Ka'abah* or kiss the Black Stone they only do so as an act of obedience to Allah, the Exalted and Ever Majestic by

following His Orders. Allah ordered them to do so and they all believe in what 'Umar said with regard to kissing the Black Stone, ***"I know that you are but a stone that does neither good nor evil. I would not have kissed you except that I saw the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) kissing you."***

## 17. What does Islam say about the people of Lût (Lot, peace be upon him)? Why should one be killed if he commits sodomy?

Homosexuality is a crime in all religions and should be prohibited in all laws whether religious or secular. Allah has destroyed whole villages for this evil deed. Our Prophet (peace be upon him) tells us that when the worst sin appears among people and they admit it, then plague and evil illnesses never before known to man will be spread. We have seen the proof of that with Aids and other new incurable diseases.

Briefly, perversion is a crime against humanity, which leads to its destruction. It is a crime against all Divine religions, which agreed upon its prohibition and punishment of those who engage in it. It is a sign of the deterioration of the natural disposition of man. Society, whether civil or religious has to prevent such a sin, as it prevents one committing suicide.

## 18. Why does Islam approve of the death penalty?

First of all, Islam does not approve of the death penalty except in cases of major sins, which if left unpunished would lead to destruction and threaten security and peace in society. Such crimes would be like premeditated murder, aggression, and armed robbery, which means forcible seizure of another's property with a weapon. If the attacked person was killed during the theft then some people of knowledge approve of the death penalty. They also approve of the death penalty for the married person who commits adultery and was proven guilty with four suitable witnesses. To prove this guilt is a very complicated process and requires special conditions. When practiced as a whole, Islamic law has proven itself to render society peaceful and prosperous. It a point counted for Islam not against it.

Is not it strange to waste one's tears for a deliberate killer and forget all about the victim lying in their blood?

Basically, in *sharî'ah* when ordaining a major punishment like that of death, it must be revealed from Allah, the Exalted. He is the only Creator of this world and the only One who has the right to ordain laws. This means that there is no point in opposing the death penalty, for Allah is the One who granted this life and the only One who decides when to end it and what crimes deserves such a punishment. This question can only be asked by someone who thinks themselves capable of legislating laws for mankind by themselves. It tells them: you did not give a person his life, so how can you take it?

## 19. What is the difference between Sunnis and Shiites?

Sunni is the one who believes that the way to choose an Imam is by those charged with authority in the Muslim community. Thus he reveres the Companions of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and believes in their choice of Abû Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmân, and 'Ali as caliphs after the death of the Prophet (peace be upon him). Shiites are sects and the most eminent among them is the Imamite sect of Shiism that believe in the Twelve Imams. They are the majority of the people in Iran. They believe that the caliphate is installed by the power of a divine text like prophethood, that the Prophet (peace be upon him) had given his orders of 'Ali's Imamate after his death, that the Companions of the Prophet (peace be upon him) deliberately disobeyed these orders. They insult the Companions and do not believe in the legitimate leadership of Abû Bakr, 'Umar, and 'Uthmân along with other immoderate beliefs.

## 20- Do Sunnis and Shiites differ concerning matters of religion?

There are some differences like that of the Imamate issue, their attitude toward the Companions, and some other issues relating to major as well as minor matters.

## 21. Why does not Islam draw a line between religion and politics?

There is no distinction between religion and politics because it believes that every matter in this life is under the Jurisdiction of Allah and all creations are His.

﴿ بِأَمْرِهِۦٓ ۗ أَلَا لَهُ ٱلْخَلْقُ وَٱلْأَمْرُ ۗ تَبَارَكَ ٱللَّهُ رَبُّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٥٤﴾ ﴾

( الأعراف : ٥٤)

**Surely, His is the Creation and Commandment. Blessed be Allah, the Lord of the '*Alamîn* (mankind, jinns and all that exists). (Al-A'râf, 7:54)**

The One who created this world has the sole right to ordain His Orders. Islam is not only doctrines, but also doctrines and laws. It covers every aspect of life. As Islam is surrendering completely to Allah, so the one who refuses to surrender or surrenders but associates others with Him, is not a Muslim. Muslims believe that the Judgments of Allah are justice itself, then when a person enacts a law, he may do injustice, and Allah is never unjust.

﴿ أَفَحُكْمَ ٱلْجَٰهِلِيَّةِ يَبْغُونَ ۚ وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ حُكْمًا لِّقَوْمٍ يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾ ﴾

( المائدة : ٥٠)

**Do they then seek the judgment of (the Days of) Ignorance? And who is better in judgment than Allah for a people who have firm Faith. (Al-Mâ'idah, 5:50)**

## 22. Why is it hard for us (Americans) to know the dates of Muslim's Feasts? Whenever we ask we get numerous answers?

This denotes the ease in matters of the Islamic religion. The issue of verifying the beginning of the Arabic month is a controversial one. Some people take the opinion stating that when the crescent is sighted in one of the Islamic countries then it is there for all Muslims. Others say that every region has its own time. The majority depends on seeing the new moon and the minority depends on making calculations but the number of people doing so are increasing. Some mix between the two and depend on calculations when the new moon cannot be seen but they do not depend on calculations when it can be seen. Opinions differ, but it does not imply opposition or enmity.

## 23. Who chooses the Imam of the Islamic community?

If you mean the Imam of an Islamic community, those charged with authority in the community are the ones responsible for choosing the Imam. They do so according to the legal conditions that enable him to be in such a position. Such qualifications are like his knowledge of the Glorious Qur'ân, Prophetic tradition, Islamic *fiqh*, and all the other required legal

sciences. He must possess integrity, good behavior, and amiability to all community members. When we say those charged with authority we mean those to whom we turn in our matters and affairs. They are among those known for their integrity and righteousness.

## 24. How can one become an Imam?

By specializing in studying the legal sciences needed for that position, the community's acceptance of him, and consent on his appointment.

## 25. Is it permissible for a woman to be an Imam?

Basically Imamate is for men, but women can Imams in women's groups.

## 26. Who is allowed to give a legal opinion? And is it the Imam's role?

*Fatwâ* (legal opinion) is the knowledge of obligation in reality. It requires a thorough knowledge of *sharî'ah* (Islamic law), that enables the person to reach the degree of *ijtihâd* (personal reasoning). Basically, *Fatwâ* is for the *mujtâhid* (one depending on *ijtihâd*). If such a person cannot be found, then there is the like and the like. This position of *ijtihâd* is one of the highest in *sharî'ah*. To be in such a state one has to be qualified in his knowledge of Qur'ân, Prophetic tradition, Arabic language, and the fundamentals of *fiqh*. He has to be well

acquainted with the abrogating and the abrogated verses, consensus and division, as well as the purposes of *sharî'ah*. *Fatwâ* also requires a thorough knowledge of the reality in which it will be applied, for some judgments change according to time, place, and circumstances. The one who does not know the state and conditions of that age and does not know the reality of the person asking him, his conditions, and circumstances, is not fit to give a legal judgment.

## 27. Why are there no democratic governments in most Muslim countries?

That is because they are secular governments. They know very well that democracy will lead them to the judgments of *sharî'ah* (Islamic law), which they do not want. Indeed, when Islamic law in implemented there is no more channeling of public money, corruption, prejudice and nepotism. So obviously those people whose lives are based on such practices will oppose the implementation of Islamic law.

## 28. What is meant by the term "the Islamic State"?

An Islamic country is one whose people have embraced Islam. It follows Islamic laws but this does not mean that it is a theocracy where according to Western understanding the clergy rule and are the source of legislation. On the contrary such a thing is considered to be political polytheism in Islam's opinion. Allah, the Exalted and Ever Majestic is the only One who has

the right of allowing, prohibiting, and legislating. No one has the right to make a forbidden thing lawful or forbid a lawful thing. Islamic principles distinguish between the source of the legal system and the source of the political authority. The legal system stems from *sharî'ah* (Islamic law), while the political system stems from the nation under *sharî'ah* supervision. Thus, an Islamic country is like any other country and its people are like any other people. The only thing that differs is its commitment to *sharî'ah*'s laws. That is what makes its treaties and commitments trustworthy. It does not deal with political hypocrisy simply because it is not in its nature to be evasive. It does not deal with the Machiavellian concept stating that 'the end justifies the means.' Thus permitting every unlawful act if it contains some benefit without regard to religion or morals. The Islamic State does not know of double standards, which has become the main trend of politicians in most civilized countries nowadays. Allah, the Exalted, says,

﴿ وَيْلٌ لِّلْمُطَفِّفِينَ ﴿١﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ إِذَا ٱكْتَالُوا۟ عَلَى ٱلنَّاسِ يَسْتَوْفُونَ ﴿٢﴾ وَإِذَا كَالُوهُمْ أَو وَّزَنُوهُمْ يُخْسِرُونَ ﴿٣﴾ أَلَا يَظُنُّ أُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ أَنَّهُم مَّبْعُوثُونَ ﴿٤﴾ لِيَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴿٥﴾ يَوْمَ يَقُومُ ٱلنَّاسُ لِرَبِّ ٱلْعَـٰلَمِينَ ﴿٦﴾ ﴾ ( المطففين : ١-٦)

**Woe to *Al-Mutaffifîn* (those who give less in measure and weight (decrease the rights of others)). Those who, when they have to receive by measure from men, demand full measure, And when they have to give by**

**measure or weight to men, give less than due. Think they not that they will be resurrected (for reckoning), On a Great Day, The Day when (all) mankind will stand before the Lord of the '*Alamîn* (mankind, jinns and all that exists)? (Al-Mutaffifîn, 83:1-6)**

That is why it is better for the International community in general and for the Western countries in particular to deal with such countries and systems to relieve itself.

## 29. What is the meaning of the word *"Ummah"* (the Islamic community)?

*Ummah* is an expression that covers all Muslims, in all places, times and all languages. This is the *ummah* that has answered the call. The whole world stands for the u*mmah* that is still being called to embrace Islam. Indeed Islam is not for Arabs only; rather it is the Peace of Allah for all creation.

## 30. At times of calamities, why do not we find Muslim's help? Why do we only find Christians?

Sometimes a person only sees what he wants to see and what he is shown on mass media outlets and as a result lives in his own illusions. I think what you are saying is untrue. Muslims have always had and still do contribute a great deal in different fields. Whenever there was a Muslim in charge, he would give donations generously, contributions, and material as well as spiritual help. It is not a part of our Islamic morals to be

malevolent, envious, or bear a grudge against anyone. We do not abstain from offering our help when someone is in trouble. Courage and generosity have always been among the characteristics of Arabs, so what about their characteristics after Islam? But let me ask you another question. Why is it that you have severely attacked Islam and Muslims in the mass media since September the eleventh? Doesn't this behavior invoke the Islamic sense whether inside the United States or outside it? What do you expect when you attack the pillar of a nation and represent them as killers and butchers? Do you expect that they would encourage you and remain silent?

## 31. Why is it that Muslims are always fighting each other?

It is a bitter reality, which is condemned and denounced from all Muslims. There are two main reasons:

- Schemes and conspiracies woven by the decision-makers in some countries led to wars. Of course the benefits of such wars are the reason behind the their being stirred up in the first place.
- Secular governments, which do not follow *sharî'ah* (Islamic law) are another reason. Islam forbids Muslims from fighting each other. It states that a Muslim is on the right path till he sheds another's blood. Allah, the Exalted, says:

﴿ وَمَن يَقْتُلْ مُؤْمِنًا مُّتَعَمِّدًا فَجَزَآؤُهُۥ جَهَنَّمُ خَٰلِدًا فِيهَا وَغَضِبَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَلَعَنَهُۥ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُۥ عَذَابًا عَظِيمًا ﴾ ( النساء : ٩٣)

**And whoever kills a believer intentionally, his recompense is Hell to abide therein, and the Wrath and the Curse of Allah are upon him, and a great punishment is prepared for him. (An-Nisâ', 4:93)**

The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said, ***"Verily, reviling a Muslim is wickedness, and fighting with him is (an act of) disbelief".***

Among the things the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) mentioned in his final sermon, he (peace be upon him) said, ***"Do not revert after my death to disbelief, striking the necks of one another."***

## 32. The proof that Islam is a violent religion is that it was spread by the sword!

Islam was not spread by the sword. This is one of the lies propounded by Orientalists. The proof is found in the Qur'ân. Allah, the Exalted, says:

﴿ لَآ إِكْرَاهَ فِي ٱلدِّينِ قَد تَّبَيَّنَ ٱلرُّشْدُ مِنَ ٱلْغَيِّ ﴾
( البقرة : ٢٥٦)

**There is no compulsion in religion. Verily, the Right Path has become distinct from the wrong path.**

**(Al-Baqarah, 2:256)**

It is known historically that non-Muslims lived peacefully side by side with Muslims in Islamic countries. Also, it goes without saying that the sword might conquer the body but not the heart. It does not inspire following its guidance. If so, what would Islam do with those who embraced it out of fear? When they meet those who believe, they say: 'We believe.' But when they are alone, they are with the dishonorable. They are but some hypocrites who have no loyalty to Islam. They are indeed a threat! [1]

## 33. What are the benefits I get from Islam as a person living in the West?

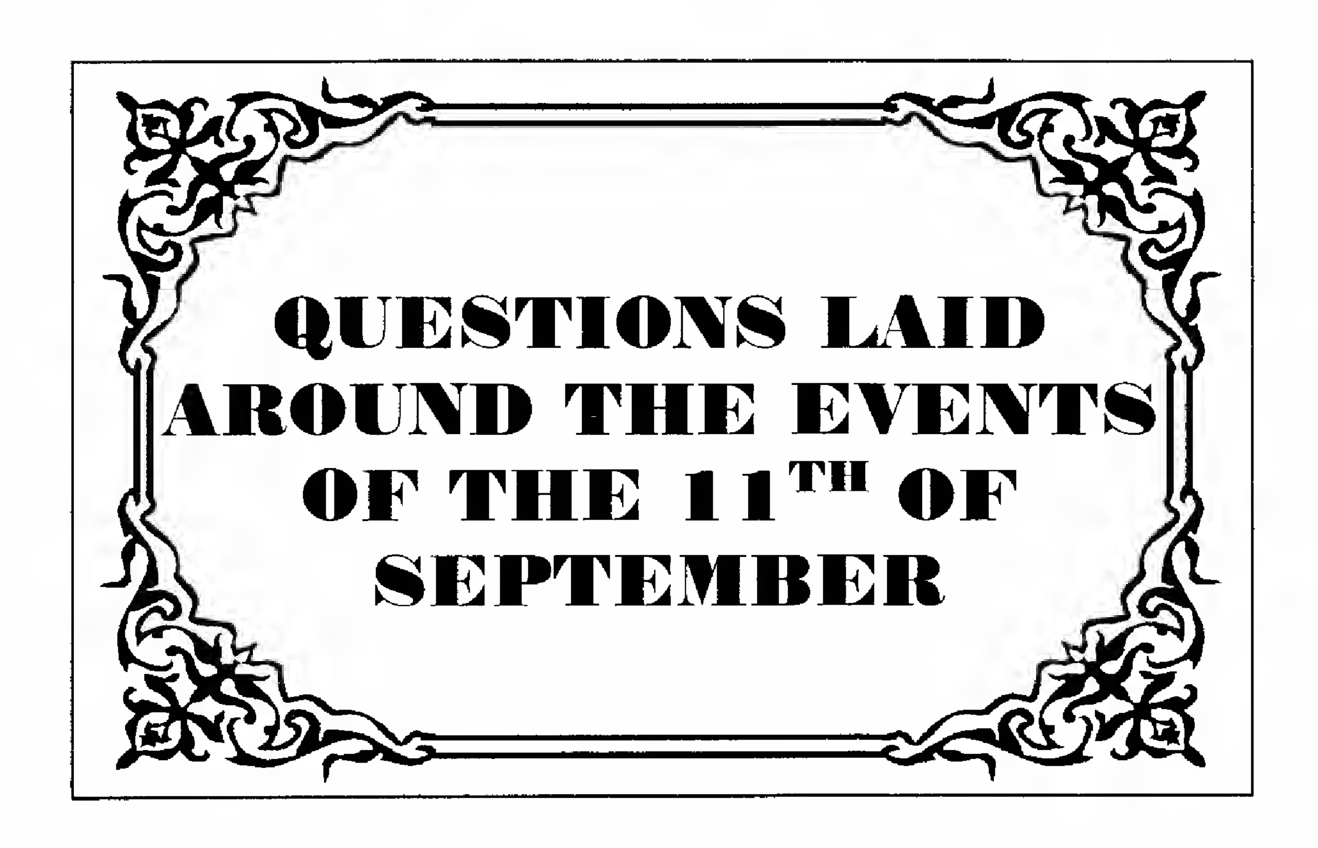
It offers you the serenity and happiness you long for. It offers you peace of mind. It keeps you safe from the worries and distresses of the materialistic civilization. Above all, it saves you from the agonies of Hellfire and grants you an eternal abode in Paradise.

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[1] We should remember that Islam is the fastest growing religion in the world today and no one is being compelled by a sword, a gun etc to embrace it! Indeed, this is a phenomenon because despite all the negative and biased media coverage, Islam is still growing.

## 34. What are the difference between the Nation of Islam, Farkhan's Sect and Islam?

Farkhan's sect has lots of distorted concepts. They still have to learn a lot about Islam. They are considered a social movement rather than a religious one. Besides, it is a minority that represents but a small group of those newly entering Islam in this country. I think their emergence is due to the oppression and injustice they were subjected to during the last decade in the American society. Reformers spare no effort to converse with them and may Allah guide them to the right path. There is no doubt that Louis Farkhan's sect is generally remoter from Islam than the Warith Ad-Deen sect.



# QUESTIONS LAID AROUND THE EVENTS OF THE 11TH OF SEPTEMBER



## 35. What was the Muslims' reaction in America and the whole world regarding the events of the 11th of September?

Muslims believe that what has come to pass on the land of the United States on the 11th of September is an abominable act as well as an assault which is deemed impermissible for any Muslim to partake in the like thereof, or aid and abet it for what it involves of unrighteous killing and the breaking of security covenants and for what its aftermath involves of outweighing the corruption that befell the authority that perpetrated the atrocious crime regardless of its identity or religion.

They do believe as well that what the government of the United States carries out as a counteract to that assault against Afghanistan and its preparation to attack other regions of the Muslims' countries is an abominable act as well as an assault. This is because it involves justifying revenge out of suspicion and rendering a sin by a more grievous sin and the spread of destruction and ruin for mere doubts and forged lies. I It is impermissible for any Muslim to partake in that assault and aid and abet I it whether on the land of the United States or abroad.

The Muslim's condemnation for the assault whatever be the authority that perpetrated the crime does not emanate from beneficial principles or fanaticism to some people or race but from a firm ideological attitude that ever urges the Muslim to maintain justice towards Allah even if it be against oneself, one's parents or kin.

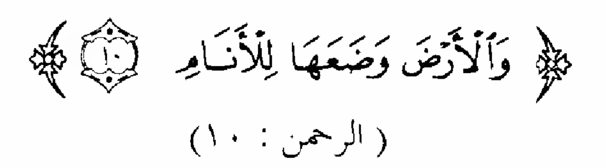
## 36. Why do the Muslims hate the American people and their democratic government?

The Muslims hold that the American people enjoy a specialty that distinguishes it from other nations for they regard it as one of the most lenient nations in terms of disposition. I It is also the least fanatic, and the most promising when it comes to answering the Call of Allah when offered to them away from falsification and distortion, but the problem lies in the decision-makers within the United States, who sit behind the scenes and trifle with the fates of people and nations. Those are the unjust governors and obviously there are some secret political powers that do nothing but mischief and spread destruction. When the American government responds to the pressure exerted by those people, it in turn exercises their political stratagem of slighting the rights of others. What it announces at a certain place is afterwards practiced at another place. It exercises the enforcement of the American sway over the world in the name of globalization or the protection of American interests and it utilizes the available war machinery for its own benefit as a means to enforce such assaults. The normalization of coexistence with it is by means of force. No doubt by acting like this it drives people to detest it and it is an attitude not only adopted by the Arabs and the Muslims alone but it definitely includes all people and nations that hope for truth, justice and equality in international relationships. To the government of the United States we say: injustice ruins kingdoms, tears down countries and wrecks civilizations. How many civilizations fell

and how many thrones were demolished because of transgression, which is the *sunnah* established by Allah that entails the hastening of punishment for those who deserve it in this worldly life. As well as that, punishment awaits them in the Hereafter. We call them to question themselves, as it is not in the welfare of their people to sacrifice a million and a half Muslims for a few millions Jews.

## 37. Why do we find a lot of T.V programs picturing the Muslims' hatred towards the west?

As is usual with mass media, the absolute opposite of what is portrayed is usually the truth, for the media in that community and other western communities is the one that overflows with spite against Islam and enmity towards the Muslims. Muslims do not hate a certain land just because of its selfhood, as lands are indeed the lands of Allah. Allah, the Exalted, says,



**And the earth He has put for the creatures.'**

**(Ar-Rahmân, 55: 10)**

Indeed, all lands celebrate the Glory of Allah, its east and west. Besides, they do not hate a certain people just for the sake of their selfhood, as all those are the nation to whom the Islamic message is addressed and to whom the Muslim cares that the Word of Allah is conveyed, and helps to bring them out from darkness to light. But they do hate injustice, usurpation, trespassing of rights, decreasing the scales of weighing and measuring and seizing the will power of people and nations. That is what the Muslims hate as well as every oppressed human mind. They do hate it from whatever authority may perpetrate it, whether it is located in the east or west.

## 38. What was the supposed response to the events of the 11th of September?

Running an accurate investigation to find out the one behind these events and punishing them alone, through neutral investigating and judging authorities.

## 39. What is the best solution for Iraq?

The Iraqi case is a case of the United States' own invention by which it justifies the presence of its military bases in the east and its unlawfully taking the riches of its people. If the United States wishes to kill Saddam Hussein personally, it does not stand powerless to do so, but it wishes to erect for him a golden statue! For he offered it what it would never have imagined. Now, through the imposed embargo it fights the Iraqi

people and most of all the Iraqi children who are without guilt, whereas Saddam, still in power, continues to enjoy the life he used to enjoy before without having any of his private belongings damaged. Do you believe that any one on earth could warrant and justify such behavior on the part of the United States? (Exercising their economic stronghold to control a nation and bring it to its knees!)

And if the politicians in that country speak of what Iraq possesses of the weapons of mass destruction, Israel possesses many times more while the United States hears, sees, blesses and extends full support to it! So what we see is the slighting of the rights of others and implementing double standards of measurement. Either the whole world agrees to the demolition and removal of the weapons of mass destruction of all countries including Israel, frees it for all, or becomes guilty of flagrant contradiction and injustice by which the world will never be rendered aright and on which kingdoms and civilizations will never be established.

## 40. Should the Muslims first consider themselves as Americans or as Muslims?

The essence is that there should be no contradiction between the two for a man belongs to a country due to holding its nationality or by residing on its land. He also belongs to a religion because he believes in its truth and has faith in its book and messenger. If he is questioned about his nationality or his residential country he should answer that he is American or

British or French or Egyptian or Syrian . . . etc., for Allah has laid down the earth for the creatures. Indeed, the people who have the best claim to inherit it are the righteous among the servants of Allah.

However, if you insisted on emphasizing the contradiction, then first they are Muslims. If Islam has forbidden a certain act to a Muslim and the human laws have allowed it for him he should abide by the Way of Allah, the Exalted and Ever-Majestic, and he should maintain firm belief in its unlawfulness even if it is rendered lawful to him by the inhabitants of the earth, one and all. If the American constitution establishes the freedom of religion, justice and equality as its basic principles and not to force one against what he believes in, then there should be no contradiction between the two matters.

### 41. Are the Muslims in America ready to fight the enemies of America?

Muslims fight for the Cause of Allah, in defense of rights and in support of the oppressed and to grant triumph to the aggrieved and the persecuted. Therefore, they are ready to participate in fighting when it is rightful and not caused by vain power or the sinful desire of degrading others.

## 42. What about the Islamic groups that kill civilians in Israel?

Under what authority does Israel occupy the Palestinian territory? Who gave them the right to render a whole nation homeless and doomed to live in exile and disunity? The problem lies in the fact that you admit the lawfulness of the assault; however, the assault itself does not establish a right. Furthermore, although such occupation is condemned by all laws despite the length of time during which the land is occupied, you condone the Israelis, giving them the right to usurp Palestinian lands. You may consider the occupying Zionists living on Palestinian lands to be innocent and entitled to live in peace; but in the eyes of the Palestinians, they are thieves, highwaymen, occupiers and usurpers. None of them has a legitimacy of existence and none has a right of a secure residence while they occupy the property of others.

## 43. Why do the Muslims believe that they would win Paradise by their suicidal endeavors?

The endeavors in which a warrior sacrifices himself for the sake of defeating his enemy have two forms:

1. That it comes to repulse an assailant, or to defend oneself in a legitimate manner, one's honor, or land against an occupier or a usurper. Martyrdom is the sincere endeavor to strive lawfully in the Cause of Allah, the Exalted, provided that from the beginning it does not involve

women, children, the elderly, and the rest of those who cannot endure fighting. However, if they were injured incidentally or owing to some fighting exigencies then they are to be judged by Allah. Abû Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated:

***A man once came to the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) and said, 'O Messenger of Allah! Tell me, what if a man comes desiring to seize my property?' He (the Prophet) replied, 'Then do not give him your property.' The man said, 'Tell me, what if he fights me?' He replied, 'Then fight against him.' The man said, 'Tell me, what if he kills me?' He replied, 'Then you are a martyr.' The man said, 'Tell me, what if I kill him?' He replied, "He is to be cast in Hellfire." (recorded in An-Nawawy's Commentary on Sahîh Muslim, chapter on The Evidence On The Fact That The One Who Intends To Seize The Property Of The Other Unjustly Then The Doer's Blood Can Be Shed With Impunity, And If He Gets Killed He Will Be Cast Into Hellfire, And Whoever Gets Murdered While Defending His Property Is Surely A Martyr).***

The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said, ***"Whoever is murdered while defending his property is surely a martyr."***

2. If it is the by-product of tyranny and enmity and in defense of falsehood, or out of rage against fate, or rebellion against whatever afflictions that might befall a human, in that case it is suicide that imposes upon its perpetrator

eternity in Hellfire. The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

***Whoever kills himself with an iron piece then his iron piece will remain in his hand by which he stabs himself in his belly in Hellfire abiding therein forever. And whoever swallows poison and kills himself then he will keep on swallowing it in Hellfire eternally abiding therein forever. And whoever throws himself from a mountain and kills himself then he will keep on throwing himself down in Hellfire eternally abiding therein forever. (Agreed upon by Al-Bukhâry and Muslim).***

On the other hand, Islam and the Islamic leaders did not singly adopt that attitude but many of the bishops in the Egyptian churches stated it. At the conference held for supporting the Palestinian case by the Pope of the Egyptian Orthodox Church, Shinûdah III, the following news report was published in Al-Waṯan (the Homeland) newspaper:

The opinion of the chief Egyptian priests was clearly evident in the conference when they cared greatly to stress their support for "The Palestinian martyrdom endeavors" launched against Israelis as they deemed it to be a way of liberating their homeland. Some of them were even carried to the extent of comparing the martyrs of these endeavors with the foremost martyrs from among the followers of 'Îsâ (Jesus, peace be upon him) who defended their country and their belief through martyrdom. The opinion shared by many of the Coptic religious

men supported in general the endeavors against the Israelis, whether they were soldiers or civilians for in the end they are "Murderers and usurpers!"

Pastor John Kaltah, the curate of the catholic Copts' Patriarch in Egypt said in the same conference that the Palestinian martyrdom endeavors resemble what was mentioned in the book entitled City of the Lord by Saint Aghtanyuas, who considered that war is fighting in the Cause of Allah wherein all the means are used as long as it is for defending one's land and belief.

Furthermore, Murqus 'Azîz, the rector of the Hanging Orthodox Church, at the same conference criticized American president, Bush, and the Israeli prime minister, Sharon, for describing the Palestinian martyrdom endeavors as terrorists saying: "Such words are absolutely rejected for the patriots are heroes."

Pastor Basanty, the bishop of both, Halwân and Al-Ma'sarah towns, located in the south of Cairo, said, "The self-sacrificing endeavors which the Palestinians undertake are done for the love of Allah." He considered that a person blowing himself up I is the loftiest thing especially when he knows that he is killing himself for the sake of others and that his target is to liberate his country. He also added, "The martyr soars high with his body knowing that he is to die for a belief."

Pastor Basanty did not consider the Palestinian martyrdom endeavors against the Israeli civilians a terrorisms or

a criminal act or suicide because the Palestinian that blows himself up amidst the Israeli civilians can not 'undertake an act against the heavily armed soldiers, moreover every Israeli is considered a legitimate military target as long as he occupies Palestinian territory.'

## 44. Why do parents ask their sons to offer themselves for the martyrdom endeavors (in Israel) to enter Paradise?

The astounding thing is that you harbor a grudge against the victim and not the butcher! You blame the murdered for the bleeding of his wounds and the rattling of death in his chest when his soul reaches the throat and find it annoying to the murderers, upsetting their amusement and the serenity of their feelings!

O You who blames the slain for his blood and the Bleeding of his veins, how easy it is to blame?

He who has been burned never forgets the pain,

He who sees the poison never suffers like he who swallows it

The rope of bereavement is wrapped around my neck

Who can blame a hanged man should he shake!!

That is exactly your similitude when you blame the unarmed, who were unjustly driven out from their homes and their property, whose bones were crushed under tanks and armored vehicles, who stood with their bare chests facing the

powerful Zionist war machinery with all that it harbors of devastation and massive destruction! The feeling of grievous injustice and tyrannical assault is what drives people to this: grown-ups and children, men and women; self-motivated and without any inducement or made fair seeming to them by any one, and this scenario will not cease until its basic cause is stopped! The tyrants must be punished and kept from indulging in their tyranny.

### 45. The Lord of the Christians is a merciful lord who offers his son to deliver the whole world to remit its sins but the Lord of the Muslims is the absolute opposite: He asks them to offer their children in Palestine and other countries to die for His Sake?

In that statement there are two lies, neither of which is the least bit less hideous than the other. Together, they both emphasize the prevalence of the ignorance about Islam and Christianity together in this country!

We find the first lie in your saying that the lord of the Christians offered his son for their sake, which is in fact words both iniquitous and false. We know that He has not begotten a son nor is there any god along with Him, and the Messiah (Christ), the son of Maryam (Mary), was no more than a Messenger; many were the Messengers that passed away before him. His mother was a woman of truth. They had both to eat their (daily) food (as any other human being). And the Messiah disdains not to serve and worship Allah, and he never said to any

of his followers or others: 'Worship me and my mother as two gods besides Allah.' And never did he say to them aught except what all the prophets and messengers before him had said: 'Worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord.'

On the other hand, the lie about the cross and the claimed salvation are refuted both by reason and authentic transmission. It is refuted by way of transmission, because there is no authentic transmission on the authority of the Messiah in which he claimed that he was a god or the son of a god or that Allah has begotten a son, Glory to Allah, He is high beyond measure above all that they attribute to Him. As well as this, in all that was authentically transmitted on the authority of the Messiah, he admitted his servitude to Allah and negated that there can ever be any god with Allah or that Allah has begotten a son.

**This idea is refuted by reason based on the following evidence:**

The most special attributes of Divinity is absolute power and the supremacy of will and ability, for Allah, the Exalted and Ever-Majestic, is the Doer of all that He wills. He commands, and there is none to contradict His Command, He judges and there is none who can keep back His Judgment. If what you call as god has comprehended everything in his power and majesty and has his reach over all things, in mercy and knowledge, than what causes him to slaughter his son without committing a sin or perpetrating an evil deed! Where is the indication of justice in

such a sacrifice! So and so commits a sin and other than him is murdered! So and so commits a crime and other than him is crucified! Is not it an enticement to the unjust to perpetrate more injustice? Victimizing the innocent and transgressing against him without justification? Could not he redeem the world without that transgression? And what is the difference between killing your son and killing the sons of others? See, if an American stands accused before the American legislation for killing his own son, has he the right to defend himself by saying that it was his own son and he should not be questioned as to what he might do to him? Or that he had killed his son in solidarity with the killing of children whether in Palestine or Iraq or in any other country where the unjust have dared to assault its children and have unrighteously wallowed in their blood? Should his deed be considered among the outstanding and virtuous acts by whose merit he deserves to be decorated and receive medals! Or should it be regarded as a criminal by which he would be convicted and stand trial.

We know that Allah, the Almighty does not benefit by any good act we might do and is not harmed by our sins; Almighty Allah says:

﴿ مَّنْ عَمِلَ صَٰلِحًا فَلِنَفْسِهِۦ ۖ وَمَنْ أَسَآءَ فَعَلَيْهَا ۗ وَمَا رَبُّكَ بِظَلَّٰمٍ لِّلْعَبِيدِ ﴿٤٦﴾ ﴾

( فصلت : ٤٦ )

**Whosoever does righteous good deed it is for (the benefit of) his own self, and whosoever does evil, it is**

**against his own self, and your Lord is not at all unjust to (His) slaves. (Fussilat, 41: 46)**

Besides, no human has the power to benefit or harm Allah. And had the people – all the people – shared the heart of the one most pious man, still it would add nothing to the Kingdom of Allah. And had they all shared the heart of the one most steeped in evil, still it would decrease nothing from the Kingdom of Allah. The expression, 'striving in the Cause of Allah' does not mean that the Lord, Exalted be He, will profit by those fighting in his Cause; believing so is tantamount to having no faith in Islam or being ignorant of it. The most that can be said is that Allah, the Exalted and Ever-Majestic, has permitted those who have been assaulted and unrighteously driven out of their dwellings, to defend themselves and to fend off the attack and at the same time are promised that whoever gets killed in that state is a martyr; (witness to the truth) Allah, the Almighty, says:

﴿ أُذِنَ لِلَّذِينَ يُقَٰتَلُونَ بِأَنَّهُمۡ ظُلِمُواْۚ وَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلَىٰ نَصۡرِهِمۡ لَقَدِيرٌ ﴿٣٩﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ أُخۡرِجُواْ مِن دِيَٰرِهِم بِغَيۡرِ حَقٍّ إِلَّآ أَن يَقُولُواْ رَبُّنَا ٱللَّهُۗ وَلَوۡلَا دَفۡعُ ٱللَّهِ ٱلنَّاسَ بَعۡضَهُم بِبَعۡضٖ لَّهُدِّمَتۡ صَوَٰمِعُ وَبِيَعٞ وَصَلَوَٰتٞ وَمَسَٰجِدُ يُذۡكَرُ فِيهَا ٱسۡمُ ٱللَّهِ كَثِيرٗاۗ وَلَيَنصُرَنَّ ٱللَّهُ مَن يَنصُرُهُۥٓۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَقَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ ﴿٤٠﴾ ﴾ (الحج: ٣٩-٤٠)

**Permission to fight is given to those (i.e. believers against disbelievers), who are fighting them, (and)**

**because they (believers) have been wronged, and surely, Allah is Able to give them (believers) victory. Those who have been expelled from their homes unjustly only because they said: "Our Lord is Allah." - For had it not been that Allah checks one set of people by means of another, monasteries, churches, synagogues, and mosques, wherein the Name of Allah is mentioned much would surely have been pulled down. Verily, Allah will help those who help His (Cause). Truly, Allah is All-Strong, All-Mighty.**

**(Al-Hajj, 22: 39-40)**

﴿ وَلَمَنِ ٱنتَصَرَ بَعْدَ ظُلْمِهِۦ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ مَا عَلَيْهِم مِّن سَبِيلٍ ﴿٤١﴾ إِنَّمَا ٱلسَّبِيلُ عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ يَظْلِمُونَ ٱلنَّاسَ وَيَبْغُونَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ ٱلْحَقِّ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٤٢﴾ ﴾ ( الشورى : ٤١-٤٢ )

**And indeed whosoever takes revenge after he has suffered wrong, for such there is no way (of blame) against them. The way (of blame) is only against those who oppress men and wrongly rebel in the earth, for such there will be a painful torment.**

**(Ash-Shûra, 42: 41 –42)**

Similarly, the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said, ***"Whoever is murdered while defending his property is***

***surely a martyr, and whoever gets murdered while defending his honor is surely a martyr."***

It is an assurance of the humans' right to resist oppression and a confirmation of man's right to reject an assault and whosever acts likewise, against such there is no cause of blame. Moreover, if Allah wills, they will be rewarded for it and they are on the right path and whatever blood shed may result, is pardonable. Literally, if the assailant is killed then he is to face the Curse of Allah and His Wrath, whereas, if the oppressed is killed then he is to be admitted into the Paradise of Allah and to His Mercy, which is a matter confessed by all the legislations and covenants issued concerning human rights since people came to know it. Bearing on that, whoever risks his soul for the sake of defending his honor or his land or his property, he is doing so to set his worldly life aright and to win the reward of those who strive in the Cause of Allah in the Hereafter, and none of it is a benefit to the Lord, Glorified and Ever-Majestic be He, for He is the Richest that stands in no need of any of His servants, while His servants stand the poorest and constantly in need of Him. Truly, all other than Allah among them stand in dire need and poverty before Allah, the Exalted.

## 46. America is fighting a strange enemy, an inhuman enemy?

What is really more strange is the sanction of injustice, the justification of assault, the dying of the occupation with the colors of legitimacy, the backing of the unjust in his injustice

and supplying him with what may destroy crops and cattle and spread devastation and destruction. But if the wronged dare to feel pain or complain or be valiant in defending their right and avenge himself for his dignity, you would have him doomed to woe, destruction, and the most grievous of ends. You would fill the world with clamors about savagery and sinking below humanity. You are as the poet has said:

Killing one person is a crime unforgiven

While killing a whole nation is a debatable question

## 47. What is *Jihad*?

*Jihad* is to spare no effort in raising the Word of Allah, championing the truth and defending the oppressed. It could be achieved with the power of the hand, the tongue or wealth , for fighting is one of the forms of *jihad*. *Jihad* has other forms among which are: *jihad* in conveying the Message of Allah, political *jihad* and providing aid, besides other kinds of *jihad* that ranges between *jihad* with the power of the hand, the tongue or with wealth.

## 48. Who is sanctioned to proclaim *Jihad*?

*Jihad* with the power of the hand (connotative of fighting) is one of the duties of government and those in charge of the Muslims' affairs. The ruler is the one entitled to proclaim jihad, but if he fails in his responsibility, the responsibility for the decision shifts to the body of Muslims. As for the other

kinds, it is assigned to the Muslim and he is held responsible for it and he is to be rewarded for it.

## 49. What is the opinion adopted by Islam in the subjects of peace, war and conflict?

Peace is the essence of Islamic law and the greeting of the Muslims is *'Salâm'* peace and the greeting of the inhabitants of Paradise on the Last Day they shall meet Him is *'Salâm'* peace. Muslims originally are a nation who convey the Message of Allah and guide to the truth. Allah, the Exalted, says:

﴿ فَإِنِ ٱعْتَزَلُوكُمْ فَلَمْ يُقَٰتِلُوكُمْ وَأَلْقَوْا۟ إِلَيْكُمُ ٱلسَّلَمَ فَمَا جَعَلَ ٱللَّهُ لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ سَبِيلًا ﴿٩٠﴾ ﴾ ( النساء : ٩٠)

**So if they withdraw from you, and fight not against you, and offer you peace, then Allah has opened no way for you against them. (An-Nisâ', 4: 90)**

And Allah, the Exalted, also said:

﴿ ۞ وَإِن جَنَحُوا۟ لِلسَّلْمِ فَٱجْنَحْ لَهَا وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ﴾

( الأنفال : ٦١)

**But if they incline to peace, you also incline to it, and (put your) trust in Allah. (Al-Anfâl, 8: 61)**

Moreover, warfare is allowed only by necessity , and the aggrieved only resort to it when danger becomes drastic and they are under threat of widespread evil. When it is designated for the sake of defending a right or driving away sedition or standing by the oppressed or to fend off an attack or withstand an assailant, it is legitimate and it possesses a body of proprieties which humanity has not applied one tenth of it in its most refined contemporary international covenants.

Originally in conflicts one should refer to Allah And His Messenger. Allah, the Exalted, says:

﴿ وَمَا اخْتَلَفْتُمْ فِيهِ مِن شَيْءٍ فَحُكْمُهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ ﴾ ( الشورى : ١٠)

**And in whatsoever you differ, the decision thereof is with Allah (He is the ruling Judge).**

**(Ash-Shûra, 42: 10)**

Likewise, Muslims are ordered to deal with justice in judging; Allah, the Exalted, says,

﴿ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَن تُؤَدُّوا الْأَمَانَاتِ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهَا وَإِذَا حَكَمْتُم بَيْنَ النَّاسِ أَن تَحْكُمُوا بِالْعَدْلِ ﴾ ( النساء : ٥٨)

**Verily! Allah commands that you should render back the trusts to those, to whom they are due; and that when you judge between men, you judge with justice.**

**(An-Nisâ', 4: 58)**

And it is not permissible that enmity should goad some to wrong others or bear hard upon them. Allah, the Exalted, says:

﴿ وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَـَٔانُ قَوْمٍ عَلَىٰٓ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا۟ ۚ ٱعْدِلُوا۟ هُوَ أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ ﴾

( المائدة : ٨)

**And let not the enmity and hatred of others make you avoid justice. Be just: that is nearer to piety.**

**(Al-Mâ'idah, 5: 8)**

﴿ يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ كُونُوا۟ قَوَّٰمِينَ بِٱلْقِسْطِ شُهَدَآءَ لِلَّهِ وَلَوْ عَلَىٰٓ أَنفُسِكُمْ أَوِ ٱلْوَٰلِدَيْنِ وَٱلْأَقْرَبِينَ ﴾ ( النساء : ١٣٥)

**O you who believe! Stand out firmly for justice, as witnesses to Allah, even though it be against yourselves, or your parents, or your kin.**

**(An-Nisâ', 4: 135)**

Qur'ânic verses have also been revealed in defense of a Jew, who was unjustly accused. Allah, the Exalted, says:

﴿ إِنَّآ أَنزَلْنَآ إِلَيْكَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ بِٱلْحَقِّ لِتَحْكُمَ بَيْنَ ٱلنَّاسِ بِمَآ أَرَىٰكَ ٱللَّهُ ۚ وَلَا تَكُن لِّلْخَآئِنِينَ خَصِيمًا ﴿١٠٥﴾ ﴾ (النساء : ١٠٥)

**Surely, We have sent down to you (O Muhammad) the Book (this Qur'ân) in truth that you might judge between men by that which Allah has shown you (i.e. has taught you through Divine Inspiration), so be not a pleader for the treacherous. (An-Nisâ', 4: 105)**

Even more, 'Amr bin Al-'Aâs, the ruler of Egypt who was deputed by 'Umar bin Al-Khattâb, authorized an Egyptian Copt to whip his own son because he transgressed against the man through the power of his father when he beat him in a race and said to him, 'How dare you outrun the son of the nobles?' 'Umar even ordered the man to raise the whip against the baldhead of his father. 'Amr said to him, 'Beat the baldhead of 'Amr, for your son did not dare to transgress against him save through your power.'

## 50. If Islam is a religion of peace then why do many terrorists exist among Muslims?

The case depends on the interpretation of the terms and the elucidation of what is meant by terrorism. Terrorism which Islam as well as other Divine laws forbids is sheer assault induced by nothing else except the sinful desire to shed blood,

terrorizing passers-by, highway robbery and usurping property. That is what Heaven and Earth consider unlawful. Withstanding the assailants and legitimate defense of oneself, one's honor and country is a legitimate *Jihad* in Islamic law and it is legitimate to strive for the covenants of human conventions. The outcome of mixing one concept with the other is simply argumentative dilemma, which the arena of intellectual conflicts witnesses at the time being. You consider the Zionist occupation of Palestine and expelling millions of its people, who are forced to live in exile and disunity , a lawful act and lend it the color of legitimacy and impart the right of security and peace to those who perpetrate such atrocious crimes. At the same time, you do not see in the Palestinian Intifada through which they are trying to redeem their lost rights and drive away oppression, except as an organization of terrorist acts that deserves the condemnation of the entire international community. When facts are distorted to such an extent has there remained what the wise can seek for justice in judgment and refer back to it in case of need?

## 51. Is suicide lawful in the Islamic religion?

In the Islamic law, suicide is forbidden and is one of the grievous sins. Anyone who commits suicide is to abide in Hellfire forever because he is displeased with His Lord, discontented with his fate and dares to defy His Ordainments. The Prophetic *hadîths* in that regard are many and the narrators have assigned complete chapters for it in the books of the

*Sunnah*. In Sahîh Muslim with commentary by An-Nawawy, he mentioned: (chapter forbidding the sin of man killing himself and whoever kills himself with the aid of something, that thing will be the means of his torment in Hellfire and none but a Muslim soul will be admitted to Paradise) where he quoted several *hadîths* among them were the following:

The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

***Whoever kills himself with an iron piece then his iron piece will remain in his hand by which he stabs himself in his belly in Hellfire abiding therein forever. And whoever swallows poison and kills himself then he will keep on swallowing it in Hellfire eternally abiding therein forever. And whoever throws himself from a mountain and kills himself then he will keep on throwing himself down in Hellfire eternally abiding therein forever.***

Also, Abû Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated:

***We undertook the battle of Hunain along with the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) when he said about a man embracing Islam, 'That man is one of the denizens of Hellfire.' So when we witnessed the fighting, the man fought with all his might and suffered many wounds, thus it was said, 'O Messenger of Allah! The man about whom you have previously said that he was one of the denizens of Hellfire, today he has fought with all his might and died.' Upon that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, 'To Hellfire.' Some of the***

*Muslims were almost brought to the verge of doubt, but while being thus it was said, 'He did not die, but he was severely injured so at nighttime when he could not endure his injuries he killed himself.' On being informed of that, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, 'Allah is the Most Great, I testify that I am the servant of Allah and His Messenger.' Then he ordered Bilâl to proclaim to the people (saying), 'None but a Muslim soul will enter Paradise and Allah supports that religion even with the help of a debauched man.'"*

Sahl bin Sa'd bin Sa'd As-Sâ'dy (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated:

*The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) encountered the infidels and they fall to fighting. There happened to be a man among the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) who left nothing whatever that it came up against him but seconded it with a blow of his sword so when the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) returned to his camp and the others returned to their own as well, they (the Companions) said, 'Today none amongst us was as successful as so and so.' Whereupon the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said, 'Yet he is one of the denizens of Hellfire.' One of the men said, 'I will adhere to his company (to watch what he shall do).' So he went out after him, stopping whenever he stopped and hurrying whenever he hurried but the man was severely injured and out of impatience to die he planted the blade of his sword to the ground and aimed its cutting edge amidst his chest, than he*

*leaned against it and killed himself. Consequently the man rushed to the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) and said, 'I testify that you are the Messenger of Allah.' He (the Prophet) asked, "Wherefore (are you saying so)?" The man replied, "The man whom you have mentioned earlier that he was one of the denizens of Hellfire, and the people disapproved of it and I said that I am the one to find out his reality. I went out in his pursuit but the man was severely injured and out of impatience to die he planted the blade of his sword to the ground and aimed its cutting edge amidst his chest, than he leaned against it and killed himself." At that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said, "A man may keep on performing the deeds of the inhabitants of Paradise as might seem to people while (in reality) he is from the inhabitants of Hellfire, and a man may keep on performing the deeds of Hellfire as might seem to people while (in reality) he is from the inhabitants of Paradise."*

Jundub (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

*A man from amongst those who lived before you had an ulcer but when it pained him he withdrew an arrow from his quiver and pierced it but the bleeding did not stop until he died, thereon Your Lord said, 'Paradise has been made forbidden for him.'"*

Sacrificing oneself for the sake of fending off an assailant and redeeming usurped rights is not considered as

terrorism. The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said, ***"Whoever gets murdered while defending his honor is surely a martyr, and whoever gets murdered while defending his property is surely a martyr."***

## 52. Why does Islam guide the Muslims to detest and kill the infidels who live amongst them?

That is a wrong concept for the Glorious Qur'ân invites us to just and kind dealing with the non-Muslims as long as they do not wage war against us on account of our faith nor support one another to drive us out of our homes nor support an enemy against us and Allah has made that a Qur'ân recited till the establishment of the Hour. Allah, the Exalted, says:

﴿ لَا يَنْهَىٰكُمُ ٱللَّهُ عَنِ ٱلَّذِينَ لَمْ يُقَٰتِلُوكُمْ فِى ٱلدِّينِ وَلَمْ يُخْرِجُوكُم مِّن دِيَٰرِكُمْ أَن تَبَرُّوهُمْ وَتُقْسِطُوٓا۟ إِلَيْهِمْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُقْسِطِينَ ﴿٨﴾ ﴾ ( الممتحنة : ٨)

**Allah does not forbid you to deal justly and kindly with those who fought not against you on account of religion and did not drive you out of your homes. Verily, Allah loves those who deal with equity.**

**(Al-Mumtahinah, 60: 8)**

Equity, as mentioned in the Qur'ânic verse, means ideal justice and piety is perfection of faith that surpasses justice and outreaches it. Any one who has said otherwise is either an

ignorant person or feigning ignorance! And the Statement of Allah, the Exalted, has preceded all:

﴿ فَإِنِ ٱعْتَزَلُوكُمْ فَلَمْ يُقَٰتِلُوكُمْ وَأَلْقَوْا۟ إِلَيْكُمُ ٱلسَّلَمَ فَمَا جَعَلَ ٱللَّهُ لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ سَبِيلًا ﴿٩٠﴾ ﴾ ( النساء : ٩٠)

**So if they withdraw from you, and fight not against you, and offer you peace, then Allah has opened no way for you against them. (An-Nisâ', 4: 90)**

Non-Muslims living among the Muslims are safeguarded and have secured rights and above such rights they are vouchsafed the Protection and Security of Allah and His Messenger. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "Whoever wrongs a non-Muslim ally or demeans him or overburdens him, I will be his opponent on the Day of Resurrection."

## 53. What don't Muslims declare their condemnation of the terrorists amongst them?

We should first agree on the interpretation of the terms and elucidate what is meant by terrorism after which we may demand its condemnation. Muslims declare their condemnation of terrorism and terrorists. Islamic law prescribes exile, which is one of the prescribed penalties of Allah, and none has the power to suspend its execution when its causes exist. But the condemnation of terrorism is not restricted to the crimes committed in the name of Islam but terrorism in all its forms

should be denounced and whatever be the thing to which it is ascribed. Furthermore, terrorism carried on the state level is no less repulsive and abhorrent than that carried on the individual level. When America marches with all its might to destroy the whole state of Afghanistan in pursuit of a couple of men whom it suspects of having committed that act from amongst the people of that region, is that not terrorism? When Iraq is besieged and its children are killed with the unjust embargo at the time when it protects the head of the regime and prevents having a single hair of his harmed, is not that terrorism? When it stands by Sharon in his terrorism against the Palestinian camps and the defenseless Palestinians, is not that terrorism? When the standards of measurements are double-faced they lose their credibility and objectivity.

## 54. Why did not those governing the Muslims affairs denounce terrorism?

They did, and they still are but the problem lies most of the time in the absence of awareness and the distortion of facts and the double standard of measurements. Some people tend to label repelling assailants as an attack and condemn it, while meanwhile they call the occupation and abuse of rights as justice and safeguard it. Some people can easily observe the fallings of their brothers but fail to see their own. How numerous are the incidents of violence and terrorism worldwide and how especially numerous are they within the United States

but the media in that country is unable to perceive except what is falsely attributed to Islam and Muslims.

## 55. Do martyrs enjoy a special privilege in the Favor of Allah? And is it true that they are promised seventy *houris* (heavenly maidens) in Paradise?

Yes, they do enjoy a special privilege in the Favor of Allah and none else shares it with them. They were promised thus together with other kinds of bliss as stated in the authenticated *hadîths* of the Prophet (peace be upon him) provided that the *Jihad* is lawful and has fulfilled its exigent conditions and that the intention of the martyr is purely dedicated to the uplifting of the Word of Allah, not fighting for gain or vainglory or to boast of his status as a warrior but he fights that the Word of Allah be the uppermost.

Abû Mûsâ (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated:

***A man came to the Prophet (peace be upon him) and said, "A man may fight for fame and a man may fight for gain and a man may fight to boast of his status as a warrior, so whom among them is (a martyr) in the Cause of Allah." He (the Prophet) replied, "He who fights so that the Word of Allah be uppermost is (a martyr) in the Cause of Allah." (Reported by Al-Bukhâry)***

Several authenticated *hadîths were mentioned about the merit of Jihad, martyrdom and martyrs,* among which I remember the following:

The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

***By Him in Whose Hand my soul is, none is wounded in the Cause of Allah and Allah is the Best-knower of who is wounded in His cause, but will surely come on the day of Resurrection, the color (of his bleeding wounds) is that of blood and the fragrance is that of musk.***

The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

***Allah has guaranteed to whosoever set out to strive in the Cause of Allah, setting out for no other reason but to strive in My Cause or out of belief in Me or having faith in My messengers, then he is warranted My Guarantee to admit him into Paradise. (Agreed upon by Al-Bukhâry and Muslim)***

The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

***The similitude of the striver in the Cause of Allah, and Allah is the Best-Knower of those who fight in His cause, is that of the constant fasting person that stands to offer prayer all the time, and Allah has vouched for the striver in His Cause, if He were to take his life, He would admit him into Paradise or bring him back safe and sound with reward or spoils. (Recorded by Al-Bukhâry)***

The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

***"Verily, in Paradise there exists one hundred grades that Allah has prepared for the strivers in the Cause of Allah; the distance between two grades tantamount to the distance between Heaven and Earth." (Reported by Al-Bukhâry)***

The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, ***"Verily, setting out in the forenoon or the afternoon in the Cause of Allah is better than the whole world and what is in it."*** (Reported by Al-Bukhâry). The Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

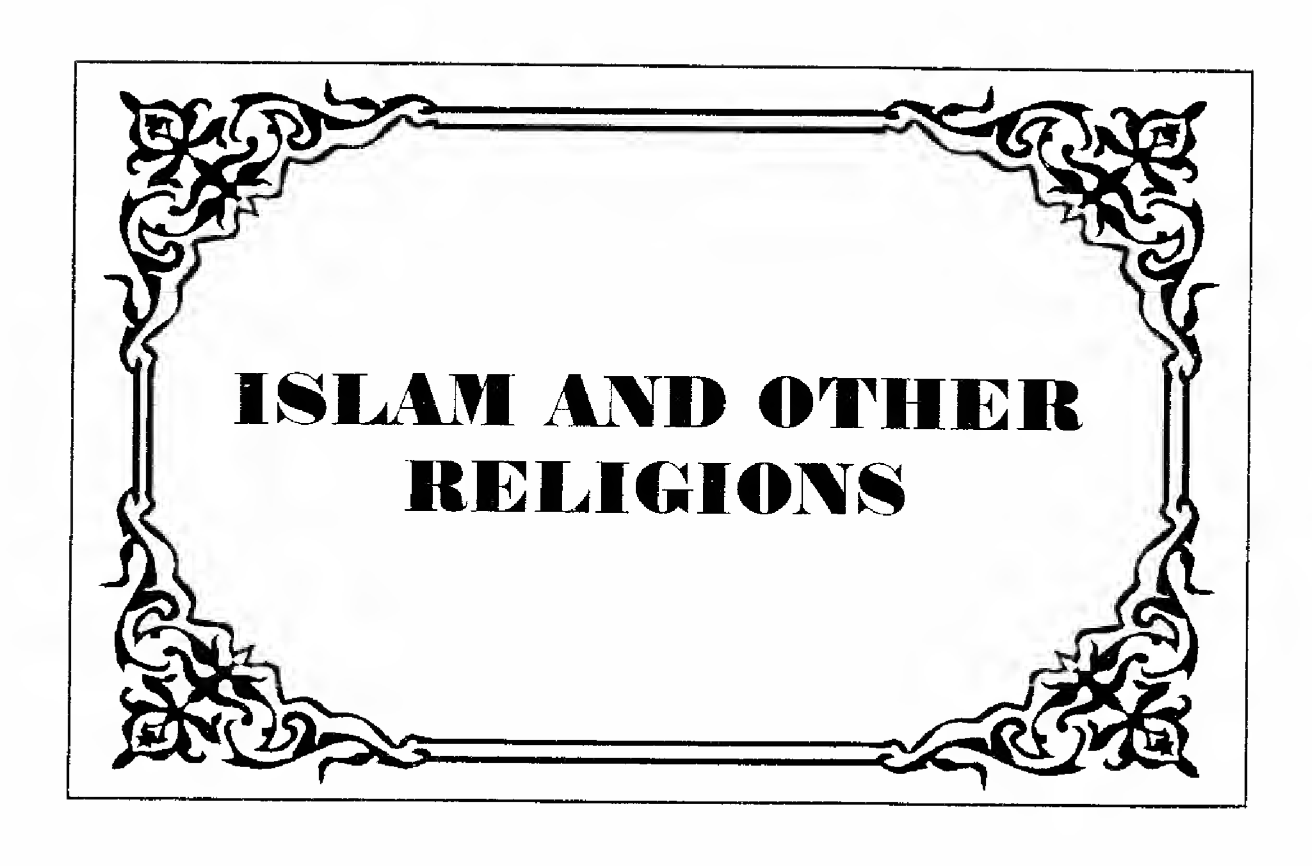
***No servant dies having goodness (reward) stored for him with Allah (in return of his good-deeds), wishes to return to worldly life even if he is to have the whole world and what in it, save the martyr for the merit he perceives of martyrdom, for he wishes to return to worldly life and be killed once again.***

(Reported by Al-Bukhâry)

Abû Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated:

***A man once came to the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) and said, "Guide me to a deed greater than Jihad?" He (the Prophet) said, "I cannot find it. (But) are you capable when the striving warrior sets out, enter your place of worship and stand offering prayer without abating and observe fasting without breaking it." The man replied, 'Who can ever do so?"***

This means that one who strives in the Cause of Allah is engaged in worship as long as he is away and nothing stands as coequal except for the one who observes continual acts of worship like fasting or standing to offer prayer all the time or other such religious practices.



# ISLAM AND OTHER RELIGIONS

## 56. Is there in Islam a possibility for the diversity of religions, so that each person is permitted to embrace the religion he wants?

Difference in creeds and religions is typical of the nature of human existence; Allah, the Exalted, says:

﴿ وَلَا يَزَالُونَ مُخْتَلِفِينَ ﴿١١٨﴾ إِلَّا مَن رَّحِمَ رَبُّكَ ۚ وَلِذَٰلِكَ خَلَقَهُمْ ﴾

( هود : ١١٨-١١٩ )

**But they will not cease to disagree. Except him on whom your Lord has bestowed His Mercy (the follower of truth - Islamic Monotheism) and for that did He create them. (Hûd, 11:118-119)**

And the Qur'ânic rule is entirely clear:

﴿ لَآ إِكْرَاهَ فِى ٱلدِّينِ ۖ قَد تَّبَيَّنَ ٱلرُّشْدُ ﴾

( البقرة : ٢٥٦ )

**There is no compulsion in religion. Verily, the Right Path has become distinct from the wrong path.**

**(Al-Baqarah, 2: 256)**

A non-Muslim has the freedom to opt to profess his religion and shoulder the responsibility of that choice in the Hereafter. Besides, the non-Muslims existed in the Muslim

community from the dawn of Islam, and they enjoyed their rights which were inviolable. Even more, the forbearance of Islam with those living in the Muslim community without professing their religion, extended in the field of jurisdiction, which pertains to governmental duties, to the limit that it left them their confessional courts wherein they appealed to judgment in keeping with their religious laws as they wished, which is something the most firmly established contemporary countries holding fast to human rights have no knowledge of. Perhaps the continuance of non-Muslims and their confessional courts in Egypt and other Muslim countries is the best evidence therein.

## 57. Why don't we hear Muslims discussing other world-renowned religions besides Judaism and Christianity?

It seems that you do not read the Muslims books but only read what is written about them and I think that you do agree with me that there is no fairness in that. For instance, Al-Azhar University has many separate departments about religions in different branches. and it is only one among the thousands of Islamic universities the like of which is limited in most other universities. Furthermore, the Muslims books abound with discussions about religions and let me point out to you the encyclopedia which the international Muslim youth seminar has issued about religions which is one among what is most recently

written in that field and it is only one of the thousands of books that the Islamic library teems with in that field.

## 58. Why are the Muslims expected to fight the non-Muslims?

That kind of generalization belongs to the fabrication of some orientalists, as Muslims do not fight except with those who wage war against them on account of their religion or unjustly drive them out of their homes or confiscate man's right of freedom of choice and put him to trial in his religion.

## 59. Why is it the duty of Muslims to fight the unbelievers (non-Muslims) until they embrace Islam?

The general Islamic rule is:

﴿ لَآ إِكۡرَاهَ فِي ٱلدِّينِۖ قَد تَّبَيَّنَ ٱلرُّشۡدُ ﴾

( البقرة : ٢٥٦)

**There is no compulsion in religion. Verily, the Right Path has become distinct from the wrong path.**

**(Al-Baqarah, 2: 256)**

And Allah, the Exalted, says:

﴿ أَفَأَنتَ تُكۡرِهُ ٱلنَّاسَ حَتَّىٰ يَكُونُواْ مُؤۡمِنِينَ ۝٩٩ ﴾ ( يونس : ٩٩)

**So, will you (O Muhammad) then compel mankind, until they become believers.' (Yûnus, 10: 99)**

Fighting in Islam occurs in order to put an end to trials in faiths, championing the oppressed and preserving man's right to choose what he wills without compulsion or sedition. Whoever dares to say that fighting in Islam is to compel people in religion has told a lie against Allah and the Muslims.

## 60. Why do Muslims hate 'Îsâ (Jesus, peace be upon him), the son of Maryam (Mary), to the extent that they do not believe that he is the son of Allah, and that he was crucified for the sins of all creatures?

I have never heard a stranger question because there is no correlation between love and esteem on one hand and the belief in the Messiah being the son of Allah or the belief in his divinity on the other hand. The Messiah is an honorable Prophet among the Prophets of Allah; more so he is one of the undaunted messengers. He has conveyed the message of his Lord and showed patience in facing the hardships his people put upon him. Allah has raised him to Himself and he will descend at the end of time as a just arbitrator to set aright all the falsities that were ascribed to him and committed in his name.

In the case of the Messiah, Islam came to be the intermediary between the two parties; one party exaggerated in censuring him and deviated away from him, those are the Jews who said about him that he was the offspring of adultery and

attributed to him as well as to his mother obscenities and abominations. The other party exaggerated in esteeming him so much that they worshipped him and his mother as two gods besides Allah, thereon the Noble Qur'ân came to clarify the wrongs of the two parties and to answer with truth and to bring back to truth those and those people. So what did the Qur'ân say about the Messiah and his mother?

﴿ وَإِذْ قَالَتِ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ يَٰمَرْيَمُ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ ٱصْطَفَىٰكِ وَطَهَّرَكِ وَٱصْطَفَىٰكِ عَلَىٰ نِسَآءِ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٤٢﴾ ﴾ ( آل عمران : ٤٢)

**And (remember) when the angels said: 'O Maryam (Mary)! Verily, Allah has chosen you, purified you (from polytheism and disbelief), and chosen you above the women of the '*Alamîn* (mankind and jinns) (of her lifetime).'" (Al-'Imrân, 3: 42)**

﴿ إِذْ قَالَتِ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ يَٰمَرْيَمُ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُبَشِّرُكِ بِكَلِمَةٍ مِّنْهُ ٱسْمُهُ ٱلْمَسِيحُ عِيسَى ٱبْنُ مَرْيَمَ وَجِيهًا فِى ٱلدُّنْيَا وَٱلْءَاخِرَةِ وَمِنَ ٱلْمُقَرَّبِينَ ﴿٤٥﴾ وَيُكَلِّمُ ٱلنَّاسَ فِى ٱلْمَهْدِ وَكَهْلًا وَمِنَ ٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾ ﴾ ( آل عمران : ٤٥-٤٦)

**Remember) when the angels said: "O Maryam (Mary)! Verily, Allah gives you the glad tidings of a Word ["Be!" - and he was! i.e. 'Îsâ (Jesus) the son of Maryam (Mary)] from Him, his name will be the Messiah 'Îsâ (Jesus), the son of Maryam (Mary), held in honor in**

**this world and in the Hereafter, and will be one of those who are near to Allah." "He will speak to the people in the cradle and in manhood, and he will be one of the righteous.'" (Al-'Imrân, 3: 45-46)**

﴿ إِذْ قَالَ ٱللَّهُ يَٰعِيسَىٰٓ إِنِّى مُتَوَفِّيكَ وَرَافِعُكَ إِلَىَّ وَمُطَهِّرُكَ مِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ وَجَاعِلُ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّبَعُوكَ فَوْقَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوٓا۟ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ ۖ ثُمَّ إِلَىَّ مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَأَحْكُمُ بَيْنَكُمْ فِيمَا كُنتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿٥٥﴾ ﴾ ( آل عمران : ٥٥)

**And (remember) when Allah said: "O 'Îsâ (Jesus)! I will take you and raise you to Myself and clear you [of the forged statement that 'Îsâ (Jesus) is Allah's son] of those who disbelieve, and I will make those who follow you (Monotheists, who worship none but Allah) superior to those who disbelieve [in the Oneness of Allah, or disbelieve in some of His Messengers, e.g. Muhammad, 'Îsâ (Jesus), Mûsa (Moses), etc., or in His Holy Books, e.g. the Taurât (Torah), the Injeel (Gospel), the Qur'ân] till the Day of Resurrection. Then you will return to Me and I will judge between you in the matters in which you used to dispute."**

**(Al-'Imrân, 3: 55)**

Thus, Muslims do believe in the prophethood of the Messiah, his purity and his sublime status and deem his revilement or impudence towards him as being against religion

and incur on such people the penalty of execution, and they make no distinction in that regard between him and Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him):

﴿ ءَامَنَ ٱلرَّسُولُ بِمَآ أُنزِلَ إِلَيۡهِ مِن رَّبِّهِۦ وَٱلۡمُؤۡمِنُونَۚ كُلٌّ ءَامَنَ بِٱللَّهِ وَمَلَٰٓئِكَتِهِۦ وَكُتُبِهِۦ وَرُسُلِهِۦ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيۡنَ أَحَدٖ مِّن رُّسُلِهِۦۚ وَقَالُواْ سَمِعۡنَا وَأَطَعۡنَاۖ غُفۡرَانَكَ رَبَّنَا وَإِلَيۡكَ ٱلۡمَصِيرُ ٢٨٥ ﴾ ( البقرة : ٢٨٥)

**The Messenger (Muhammad) believes in what has been sent down to him from his Lord, and (so do) the believers. Each one believes in Allah, His Angels, His Books, and His Messengers. They say, "We make no distinction between one another of His Messengers" - and they say, "We hear, and we obey. (We seek) Your Forgiveness, our Lord, and to You is the return (of all)." (Al-Baqarah, 2: 285)**

At the same time they also believe in his humanity and his being one of the servants of Allah and that Allah, the Almighty, is ever more majestic of begetting a son but to Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and the earth, all are obedient to Him. Islam says that ascribing a son to Allah, the Exalted and Ever-Majestic, is one of the most grievous revilements of the Lord, Glorified be He. Indeed, it is among the abominations whereby the heavens are almost torn and the earth is split asunder, and the mountains fall in ruins for its hideousness. How could He ever have a son and he never had a wife? Allah, the

Exalted and Ever-Majestic, is the One and Only; the Self-Sufficient Master, Whom all creatures need and He neither eats nor drinks; He begets not, nor was He begotten. And there is none co-equal or comparable unto Him. Allah, the Exalted, says:

﴿ وَقَالُوا۟ ٱتَّخَذَ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنُ وَلَدًا ﴿٨٨﴾ لَّقَدْ جِئْتُمْ شَيْـًٔا إِدًّا ﴿٨٩﴾ تَكَادُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتُ يَتَفَطَّرْنَ مِنْهُ وَتَنشَقُّ ٱلْأَرْضُ وَتَخِرُّ ٱلْجِبَالُ هَدًّا ﴿٩٠﴾ أَن دَعَوْا۟ لِلرَّحْمَٰنِ وَلَدًا ﴿٩١﴾ وَمَا يَنۢبَغِى لِلرَّحْمَٰنِ أَن يَتَّخِذَ وَلَدًا ﴿٩٢﴾ إِن كُلُّ مَن فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ إِلَّآ ءَاتِى ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ عَبْدًا ﴿٩٣﴾ لَّقَدْ أَحْصَىٰهُمْ وَعَدَّهُمْ عَدًّا ﴿٩٤﴾ وَكُلُّهُمْ ءَاتِيهِ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ فَرْدًا ﴿٩٥﴾ ﴾ ( مريم : ٨٨-٩٥)

**And they say: "The Most Beneficent (Allah) has begotten a son (or offspring or children) [as the Jews say: 'Uzair (Ezra) is the son of Allah, and the Christians say that He has begotten a son [‘Îsâ (Christ)], and the pagan Arabs say that He has begotten daughters (angels, etc.)]." Indeed you have brought forth (said) a terrible evil thing. Whereby the heavens are almost torn, and the earth is split asunder, and the mountains fall in ruins, that they ascribe a son (or offspring or children) to the Most Beneficent (Allah). But it is not suitable for (the Majesty of) the Most Beneficent (Allah) that He should beget a son (or offspring or children). There is none in the heavens and the earth but comes unto the Most Beneficent**

**(Allah) as a slave. Verily, He knows each one of them, and has counted them a full counting. And everyone of them will come to Him alone on the Day of Resurrection (without any helper, or protector or defender)." (Maryam, 19: 88-95)**

﴿ يَٰٓأَهۡلَ ٱلۡكِتَٰبِ لَا تَغۡلُواْ فِي دِينِكُمۡ وَلَا تَقُولُواْ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ إِلَّا
ٱلۡحَقَّۚ إِنَّمَا ٱلۡمَسِيحُ عِيسَى ٱبۡنُ مَرۡيَمَ رَسُولُ ٱللَّهِ وَكَلِمَتُهُۥٓ أَلۡقَىٰهَآ إِلَىٰ
مَرۡيَمَ وَرُوحٞ مِّنۡهُۖ فَـَٔامِنُواْ بِٱللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِۦۖ وَلَا تَقُولُواْ ثَلَٰثَةٌۚ ٱنتَهُواْ خَيۡرٗا لَّكُمۡۚ
إِنَّمَا ٱللَّهُ إِلَٰهٞ وَٰحِدٞۖ سُبۡحَٰنَهُۥٓ أَن يَكُونَ لَهُۥ وَلَدٞۘ لَّهُۥ مَا فِي ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِي
ٱلۡأَرۡضِۗ وَكَفَىٰ بِٱللَّهِ وَكِيلٗا ﴿١٧١﴾ لَّن يَسۡتَنكِفَ ٱلۡمَسِيحُ أَن يَكُونَ
عَبۡدٗا لِّلَّهِ وَلَا ٱلۡمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ ٱلۡمُقَرَّبُونَۚ وَمَن يَسۡتَنكِفۡ عَنۡ عِبَادَتِهِۦ وَيَسۡتَكۡبِرۡ
فَسَيَحۡشُرُهُمۡ إِلَيۡهِ جَمِيعٗا ﴿١٧٢﴾ ﴾ ( النساء : ١٧١-١٧٢)

**O people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians)! Do not exceed the limits in your religion, nor say of Allah aught but the truth. The Messiah 'Îsâ (Jesus), son of Maryam (Mary), was (no more than) a Messenger of Allah and His Word, ("Be!" - and he was) which He bestowed on Maryam (Mary) and a spirit (*Rûh*) created by Him; so believe in Allah and His Messengers. Say not: "Three (trinity)!" Cease! (it is) better for you. For Allah is (the only) One Ilâh (God), Glory be to Him (Far Exalted is He) above having a**

**son. To Him belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth. And Allah is All Sufficient as a Disposer of affairs. The Messiah will never be proud to reject to be a slave to Allah, nor the angels who are near (to Allah). And whosoever rejects His worship and is proud, then He will gather them all together unto Himself. (An-Nisâ', 4: 171-172)**

## 61. Did 'Îsâ (Jesus, peace be upon him) die on the Cross or is he is still alive?

Verily, the Christ was not crucified, rather Allah made him to ascend to Himself while he was still alive. He has not as yet tasted death as we know it; that Allah prescribed for the sons of Adam (i.e., human beings). Moreover, at the end of time he will descend from Heaven as a just and wise man. After his descent, he will destroy the Cross, kill the swine and bring people back to the Islamic Law.

Some of the evidence that proves that he was not crucified and that Allah, the Exalted and Ever-Majestic, raised him to the heavens are the following:

(1)Allah, the Exalted denounced the Jews for alleging that Jesus (peace be upon him) was crucified, in the Qur'ânic verses:

﴿ وَقَوْلِهِمْ إِنَّا قَتَلْنَا ٱلْمَسِيحَ عِيسَى ٱبْنَ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولَ ٱللَّهِ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ وَمَا صَلَبُوهُ وَلَٰكِن شُبِّهَ لَهُمْ ۚ وَإِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱخْتَلَفُوا۟ فِيهِ لَفِى شَكٍّ مِّنْهُ ۚ مَا لَهُم بِهِۦ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِلَّا ٱتِّبَاعَ ٱلظَّنِّ ۚ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ يَقِينًۢا ﴿١٥٧﴾ بَل رَّفَعَهُ ٱللَّهُ إِلَيْهِ ۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا ﴿١٥٨﴾ ﴾ ( النساء : ١٥٧-١٥٨)

**And because of their saying (in boast), 'We killed Messiah 'Îsâ (Jesus), son of Maryam (Mary), the Messenger of Allah,' - but they killed him not, nor crucified him, but the resemblance of 'Îsâ (Jesus) was put over another man (and they killed that man), and those who differ therein are full of doubts. They have no (certain) knowledge, they follow nothing but conjecture. For surely; they killed him not (i.e. 'Îsâ (Jesus), son of Maryam (Mary). But Allah raised him ('Îsâ (Jesus)) up (with his body and soul) unto Himself (and he >> is in the heavens). And Allah is Ever All-Powerful, All Wise. (An-Nisâ', 4: 157-158)**

The Jews alleged that they crucified Jesus (peace be upon him) and killed him, yet Allah denied their allegations and answered them in the verse that says:

﴿ بَل رَّفَعَهُ ٱللَّهُ إِلَيْهِ ۚ ﴾ ( النساء : ١٥٨)

**But Allah raised him ('Îsâ (Jesus)) up (with his body and soul) unto Himself (and he >> is in the heavens).'**

This indeed, concludes that Jesus (peace be upon him) was raised body and soul and refutes their allegations because raising the soul alone (without the body) does not counteract the allegation of killing and crucifying, and does not highlight the uniqueness of 'Îsâ (Jesus, peace be upon him), for the souls of all righteous people are raised to Allah, the Exalted and Ever-Majestic, and all the gates of heaven are opened to receive them.

(2) In the Statement of Allah which says:



**And there is none of the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians), but must believe in <u>him</u> ('Îsâ (Jesus), son of Maryam (Mary), as only a Messenger of Allâh and a human being), before his ('Îsâ (Jesus) >> or a Jew's or a Christian's] death [] (at the time of the appearance of the angel of death). And on the Day of Resurrection, he ('Îsâ (Jesus)) will be a witness against them.' (An-Nisâ', 4: 159)**

The pronoun here refers to Jesus (peace be upon him) and his descent at the end of time to spread wisdom and justice and to call mankind to Islam. This, indeed, concludes that he has not yet experienced the ordinary death that Allah prescribed for

all the Sons of Adam (i.e., human beings). Verily, this will take place when the time comes for Jesus (peace be upon him) to descend and for the people of the Book to witness the reality of his birth, his ascension and to believe in him as a Prophet of Allah.

The descent of Jesus (peace be upon him) as a wise and a just man, is considered one of the beliefs of the Muslims. Moreover, some Qur'ânic verses as well as many authentic Prophetic *hadîths* provide evidence for this. From among these Qur'ânic references are the following:

1. The Statement of Allah which says:

﴿ وَإِنَّهُۥ لَعِلْمٌ لِّلسَّاعَةِ فَلَا تَمْتَرُنَّ بِهَا وَٱتَّبِعُونِ هَٰذَا صِرَٰطٌ مُّسْتَقِيمٌ ﴾ (٦١)

(الزخرف : ٦١)

**And he ('Îsâ (Jesus), son of Maryam (Mary)) shall be a known sign for (the coming of) the Hour (Day of Resurrection) (i.e. 'Îsâ's (Jesus) descent on the earth). Therefore have no doubt concerning it (i.e. the Day of Resurrection). And follow Me (Allah) (i.e. be obedient to Allah and do what He orders you to do, O mankind)! This is the Straight Path (of Islamic Monotheism, leading to Allah and to His Paradise)'**

**(Al-Zukhruf, 43: 61)**

Concerning the statement of Ibn 'Abbâs which reads:

I do not know whether the people knew about the interpretation of the Qur'ânic verse:

﴿ وَإِنَّهُۥ لَعِلْمٌ لِّلسَّاعَةِ ﴾ ( الزخرف : ٦١)

**And he ('Îsâ (Jesus), son of Maryam (Mary)) shall be a known sign for (the coming of) the Hour (Day of Resurrection) (i.e. 'Îsâ's (Jesus) descent on the earth),'**

or they did not recognize it.

Ibn Jarîr At-Tabary said, "The unseen here refers to the descent of the Christ." Similar narrations have been transmitted from Qatâdah, Adh-Dhahhâk, As-Saddyh, Ibn Zaid, and many others from our pious predecessors.

(1) The statement of Allah which says:

﴿ وَإِن مِّنْ أَهْلِ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ إِلَّا لَيُؤْمِنَنَّ بِهِۦ قَبْلَ مَوْتِهِۦ ۖ وَيَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ يَكُونُ عَلَيْهِمْ شَهِيدًا ﴿١٥٩﴾ ﴾ ( النساء : ١٥٩)

**And there is none of the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians), but must believe in him ('Îsâ (Jesus), son of Maryam (Mary), as only a Messenger of Allah and a human being), before his ('Îsâ (Jesus) or a Jew's or a Christian's) death (at the time of the appearance of the angel of death).' (An-Nisâ', 4: 159)**

We mentioned previously that the pronoun here refers to the Christ and this leads to the fact of his descent at the end of time, because what is mentioned in the verse has not yet come into being, for there are many people from amongst the people of the Book, who still disbelieve in him. This will inevitably happen at the end of time when he returns.

If we refer to the Prophetic traditions, we will find many Prophetic *hadîths,* which were narrated successively and they all mentioned the fact of his descent and described how and where he will descend. The following are some examples from the Prophetic traditions:

The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

***'By Him in Whose hand my soul is, the son of Mariam (Jesus, the son of Mary) is about to descend prevailing wisdom and justice. He would smash the Cross, kill the swine and enjoin Jizyah (taxes enjoined on the non-Muslims living under the protection of a Muslim state). Wealth would become plentiful to the extent that no one would be in need of it. In this connection, Abû Hurairah said, 'If you wish, read the Qur'ânic verse in which Allah says:***

﴿ وَإِن مِّنْ أَهْلِ ٱلْكِتَـٰبِ إِلَّا لَيُؤْمِنَنَّ بِهِۦ قَبْلَ مَوْتِهِۦ ﴾ ( النساء : ١٥٩)

**And there is none of the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians), but must believe in him ('Îsâ (Jesus), son of Maryam (Mary), as only a Messenger of Allah and a human being), before his ('Îsâ (Jesus) or a Jew's**

**or a Christian's) death (at the time of the appearance of the angel of death).'** **(An-Nisâ', 4: 159)**

The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

***Some people from amongst my nation would keep fighting (in the Cause of Allah) and would remain victorious until the Day of Resurrection.' In this connection he said, "Îsâ, the son of Mariam (Jesus, the son of Mary) would then descend, and their ruler would say, 'come and pray for us,' but he would say, 'No, verily, some of you are commanders over the rest of you (have more power and authority than the others). This is the way Allah has honored this nation.***

## 62. Why do Muslims not believe in the miracles of Jesus (peace be upon him) ? Weren't these supernatural occurrences clear evidence of his divinity?

Muslims believe in the miracles of Jesus (peace be upon him) just as they believe in the miracles of Muhammad (peace be upon him). Moreover, a Muslim can never be a true Muslim without believing in them, for their evidence comes from the Glorious Qur'ân. Consequently, no one's religion can ever be true without believing in these miracles and admitting every fact concerning them. Allah, the Exalted says in the verse:

﴿ وَيُعَلِّمُهُ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَٱلْحِكْمَةَ وَٱلتَّوْرَىٰةَ وَٱلْإِنجِيلَ ﴿٤٨﴾ وَرَسُولًا إِلَىٰ بَنِىٓ
إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ أَنِّى قَدْ جِئْتُكُم بِـَٔايَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ ۖ أَنِّىٓ أَخْلُقُ لَكُم مِّنَ ٱلطِّينِ كَهَيْـَٔةِ

ٱلطَّيۡرِ فَأَنفُخُ فِيهِ فَيَكُونُ طَيۡرَۢا بِإِذۡنِ ٱللَّهِۖ وَأُبۡرِئُ ٱلۡأَكۡمَهَ وَٱلۡأَبۡرَصَ وَأُحۡيِ
ٱلۡمَوۡتَىٰ بِإِذۡنِ ٱللَّهِۖ وَأُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا تَأۡكُلُونَ وَمَا تَدَّخِرُونَ فِي بُيُوتِكُمۡۚ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَأٓيَةٗ
لَّكُمۡ إِن كُنتُم مُّؤۡمِنِينَ ﴿٤٩﴾ (آل عمران : ٤٨-٤٩)

**And He (Allâh) will teach him (Jesus) the Book and al-hikmah (i.e. the *Sunnah*, the faultless speech of the Prophets, wisdom, etc.), (and) the Taurât (Torah) and the Injeel (Gospel).And will make him (Jesus) a Messenger to the Children of Israel (saying), "I have come to you with a sign from your Lord, that I design for you out of clay, as it were, the figure of a bird, and breathe into it, and it becomes a bird by Allâh's Leave; and I heal him who was born blind, and the leper, and I bring the dead to life by Allâh's Leave. And I inform you of what you eat, and what you store in your houses. Surely, therein is a sign for you, if you believe.'**

**(Âli-'Imrân, 3: 48-49)**

At the same time, these miracles do not indicate or prove the divinity of Jesus (peace be upon him) but they do testify to his Prophethood. The similitude of him concerning this issue is like that of all other Messengers. For example, the sea was parted for Mûsâ (Moses, peace be upon him), the stick in his hand was transformed into a snake moving quickly, and through it Allah annulled the illusionary power of the sorcerers. Despite all these miracles, he was not the Lord.

Also, the wind was subjected to Sulaimân (Solomon, peace be upon him) to blow wherever he wished. The Jinn were employed to serve him and made him anything he wanted like high rooms, images, basins as large as reservoirs and (cooking) cauldrons fixed (in their places). Despite all these miracles he was never considered the Lord. Verily, you (people of the Book) attribute many miracles to the followers of Jesus (peace be upon him) but none of them are considered to be the Lord.

## 63. Why do Muslims not believe that 'Îsâ (Jesus, peace be upon him) is their savior, that is to say, that he bears their sins, vices, and bad deeds?

That is because Allah, the Almighty has prescribed that no person can bear the burden of another. Here, we are referring to the burden of sin. And that man can have nothing but what he does (good or bad). This principle contradicts that which Jesus (peace be upon him) was supposed to have taught (according to the people of the Book). Concerning this point, Allah, the Exalted, says, 'And (remember) when Allah will say (on the Day of Resurrection):

﴿ وَإِذْ قَالَ ٱللَّهُ يَٰعِيسَى ٱبْنَ مَرْيَمَ ءَأَنتَ قُلْتَ لِلنَّاسِ ٱتَّخِذُونِى وَأُمِّىَ إِلَٰهَيْنِ مِن دُونِ
ٱللَّهِ ۖ قَالَ سُبْحَٰنَكَ مَا يَكُونُ لِىٓ أَنْ أَقُولَ مَا لَيْسَ لِى بِحَقٍّ ۚ إِن كُنتُ قُلْتُهُۥ فَقَدْ عَلِمْتَهُۥ ۚ
تَعْلَمُ مَا فِى نَفْسِى وَلَآ أَعْلَمُ مَا فِى نَفْسِكَ ۚ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ عَلَّٰمُ ٱلْغُيُوبِ ﴿١١٦﴾ مَا قُلْتُ لَهُمْ

إِلَّا مَآ أَمَرْتَنِي بِهِۦٓ أَنِ ٱعْبُدُواْ ٱللَّهَ رَبِّي وَرَبَّكُمْۚ وَكُنتُ عَلَيْهِمْ شَهِيدًا مَّا دُمْتُ فِيهِمْۖ فَلَمَّا تَوَفَّيْتَنِي كُنتَ أَنتَ ٱلرَّقِيبَ عَلَيْهِمْۚ وَأَنتَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ ﴿١١٧﴾ إِن تُعَذِّبْهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ عِبَادُكَۖ وَإِن تَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ فَإِنَّكَ أَنتَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿١١٨﴾ قَالَ ٱللَّهُ هَٰذَا يَوْمُ يَنفَعُ ٱلصَّٰدِقِينَ صِدْقُهُمْۚ لَهُمْ جَنَّٰتٌ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَآ أَبَدًاۚ رَّضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُواْ عَنْهُۚ ذَٰلِكَ ٱلْفَوْزُ ٱلْعَظِيمُ ﴿١١٩﴾ ﴾ ( المائدة : ١١٦-١١٩ )

**O 'Îsâ (Jesus), son of Maryam (Mary)! Did you say unto men, Worship me and my mother as two gods besides Allah? 'He will say: Glory be to You! It was not for me to say what I had no right (to say). Had I said such a thing, You would surely have known it. You know what is in my inner self though I do not know what is in Yours, truly, You, only You, are the All-Knower of all that is hidden and unseen.' Never did I say to them ought except what You (Allah) did command me to say, 'Worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord.' And I was a witness over them while I dwelt amongst them, but when You took me up, You were the Watcher over them, and You are a Witness to all things. (This is a great admonition and warning to the Christians of the whole world). If You punish them, they are Your slaves, and if You forgive them, verily You, only You are the Almighty, the All-Wise. Allah**

**will say: This is a Day on which the truthful will profit from their truth.' (Al-Mâ'idah, 5: 116-119)**

And Allah, the Exalted, also said:

**Surely, they have disbelieved who say, 'Allah is the Messiah ('Îsâ (Jesus)), son of Maryam (Mary).' But the Messiah ('Îsâ (Jesus)) said, 'O Children of Israel! Worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord.' Verily, whosoever sets up partners in worship with Allah, then Allah has forbidden Paradise for him, and the Fire will be his abode. And for the *Zâlimûn* (polytheists and wrong-doers) there are no helpers.' (Al-Mâ'idah, 5:72).**

## 64. From the Islamic point of view, will Christians enter Paradise?

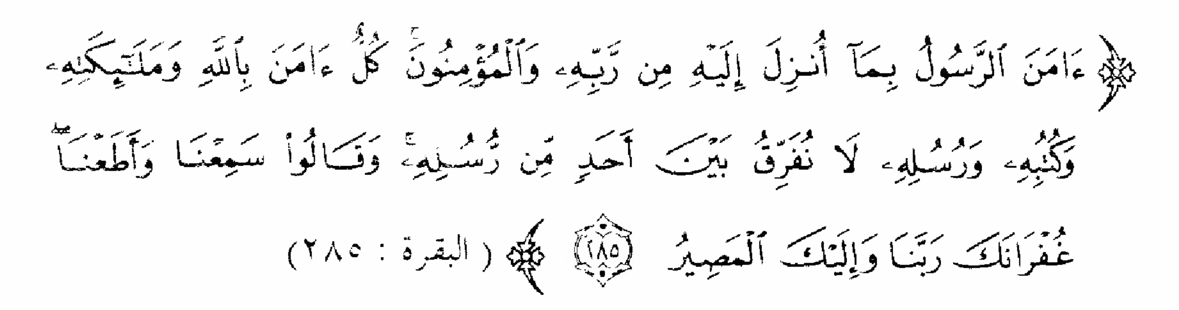
Whoever believed in Jesus (peace be upon him) before the advent of Muhammad (peace be upon him) without associating any partners in worshipping Allah (at that time), verily he is from amongst the true believers and would be saved (from the Hell-fire) in the Hereafter. The Qur'ân contains a whole chapter entitled Sura Al-Burûj, which speaks about the Christian martyrs in the story of the people of the ditch.

Whoever truly believed in Jesus (peace be upon him) at that time, automatically believed in Muhammad (peace be upon him) when he was sent as a messenger and would receive a twofold reward; one for believing in Jesus (peace be upon him) and a second reward for believing in Muhammad (peace be

upon him). However, those who associated him Jesus (peace be upon him) in worship with Allah or continued to call themselves Christians even after Muhammad (peace be upon him) was sent , they would be amongst the denizens of the Fire, if the call for Islam had reached them directly and authentically. Such people will be called to account for not converting to the truth, and moreover they will be guilty of rejecting the call and opposing it. At the same time, there are those amongst them who had not heard about the call or it reached them in a distorted or unauthentic form. Such people will not be called to account for not converting to the truth, and their affair would return to Allah (to decide whether to be admitted into Paradise or to be cast into the Hell-fire).

### 65. How can you say that you believe in the prophet hood of Ibrâhîm (Abraham, peace be upon him), Ishâq (Isaac, peace be upon him), Mûsâ (Moses, peace be upon him), and Yahyâ (Yahya, peace be upon him), while these Prophets were from the Jews?

To believe in all the Messengers is one of the principles of Faith according to the religious view of the Muslims. One's belief in Islam can never be complete without believing in it, so whoever disbelieves in only one Prophet from all the other Prophets of Allah, verily, he disbelieves in all the Prophets. Allah, the Exalted, says:


﴿ ءَامَنَ ٱلرَّسُولُ بِمَآ أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مِن رَّبِّهِۦ وَٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ ۚ كُلٌّ ءَامَنَ بِٱللَّهِ وَمَلَٰٓئِكَتِهِۦ وَكُتُبِهِۦ وَرُسُلِهِۦ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِّن رُّسُلِهِۦ ۚ وَقَالُوا۟ سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا ۖ غُفْرَانَكَ رَبَّنَا وَإِلَيْكَ ٱلْمَصِيرُ ﴿٢٨٥﴾ ﴾ ( البقرة : ٢٨٥)

**The Messenger (Muhammad) believes in what has been sent down to him from his Lord, and (so do) the believers. Each one believes in Allah, His Angels, His Books, and His Messengers. They say, 'We make no distinction between one another of His Messengers' - and they say: We hear, and we obey. (We seek) Your Forgiveness, our Lord, and to You is the return (of all).' (Al-Baqarah, 2:285)**

It is said that Ibrâhîm (Abraham, peace be upon him) and Ishâq (Isaac, peace be upon him) were from the Jews, but this is an incorrect assertion because the Torah, which is the Divine Book of the Jews, was revealed a long time after the lifetime of Ibrâhim (peace be upon him). Thus how can we trace back the ancestry of Ibrâhîm to Mûsâ (Moses, peace be upon him), while Mûsâ was not commissioned until much later?

Allah, the Exalted, says:

﴿ يَٰٓأَهْلَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ لِمَ تُحَآجُّونَ فِىٓ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ وَمَآ أُنزِلَتِ ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةُ وَٱلْإِنجِيلُ إِلَّا مِنۢ بَعْدِهِۦٓ ۚ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٦٥﴾ ﴾ ( آل عمران : ٦٥)

**O people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians)! Why do you dispute about Ibrâhîm (Abraham), while the Taurât (Torah) and the Injîl (Gospel) were not revealed till after him? Have you then no sense?'**

**(Âli-'Imrân, 3:65).**

﴿ مَا كَانَ إِبْرَٰهِيمُ يَهُودِيًّا وَلَا نَصْرَانِيًّا وَلَٰكِن كَانَ حَنِيفًا مُّسْلِمًا وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿٦٧﴾ ﴾ ( آل عمران : ٦٧ )

**Ibrâhîm (Abraham) was neither a Jew nor a Christian, but he was a true Muslim *hanifa* (Islamic Monotheism - to worship none but Allâh Alone) and he was not of *Al-Mushrikûn.*'** **(Âli-'Imrân, 3:67)**

During the lifetime of Mûsâ (Moses, peace be upon him) and before Judaism was abrogated, it was indeed a true religion, wherein people used to worship Allah, the Exalted. They used to seek His Pleasure and Paradise according to its teachings. We, indeed, recite the Qur'ânic verse in which Allah, the Exalted, says:

﴿ وَمِن قَوْمِ مُوسَىٰ أُمَّةٌ يَهْدُونَ بِالْحَقِّ وَبِهِ يَعْدِلُونَ ﴿١٥٩﴾ ﴾ ( الأعراف : ١٥٩ )

**And of the people of Mûsâ (Moses) there is a community who lead (the men) with truth and**

**establish justice therewith (i.e. judge men with truth and justice).' (Al-A'râf, 7: 159).**

So whoever believed in Mûsâ (Moses, peace be upon him) during his lifetime or even before it was considered a true believer and would be saved (from the Hell-fire) in the Hereafter. A Jew and a Muslim fell into dispute by drawing comparisons between Mûsâ and Muhammad (peace be upon them), consequently, the Prophet (peace be upon him) prohibited people from drawing comparisons between the prophets.

## 66. Do some Muslims worship Muhammad (peace be upon him) as some Christians who worship 'Îsâ (Jesus, peace be upon him)?

Truly Muslims do not worship anyone or anything but Allah, for believing in the Oneness of Allah, and believing in the Mission of Muhammad (peace be upon him) is the first obligation for those who are willing to embrace Islam. Moreover, it is the first principle, which people are called to. Monotheism is the common factor of Faith that is shared by people of all other religions, for Allah stressed this concept in every Revelation and with every Prophet He sent. Allah, the Exalted, says:

﴿ وَمَآ أَرْسَلْنَا مِن قَبْلِكَ مِن رَّسُولٍ إِلَّا نُوحِىٓ إِلَيْهِ أَنَّهُۥ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّآ أَنَا۠ فَٱعْبُدُونِ ﴿٢٥﴾ ﴾ ( الأنبياء : ٢٥ )

**And We did not send any Messenger before you (O Muhammad) but We inspired him (saying): *Lâ ilâha illa Ana* [none has the right to be worshipped but I (Allah)), so worship Me (Alone and none else).'**

**(Al-Anbiyâ', 21: 25).**

Allah, the Exalted also says:

﴿ قُلْ يَٰٓأَهْلَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ تَعَالَوْا۟ إِلَىٰ كَلِمَةٍ سَوَآءٍۭ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ أَلَّا نَعْبُدَ إِلَّا ٱللَّهَ وَلَا نُشْرِكَ بِهِۦ شَيْـًٔا وَلَا يَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُنَا بَعْضًا أَرْبَابًا مِّن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ فَإِن تَوَلَّوْا۟ فَقُولُوا۟ ٱشْهَدُوا۟ بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿٦٤﴾ ﴾ ( آل عمران : ٦٤)

**Say (O Muhammad): O people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians): Come to a word that is just between us and you, that we worship none but Allah, and that we associate no partners with Him, and that none of us shall take others as lords besides Allâh[]. Then, if they turn away, say: Bear witness that we are Muslims.'**

**(Âli-'Imrân, 3: 64)**

Any person who professes to be a Muslim and exaggerates in seeking closeness to the Prophet (peace be upon him) and raises him to the state of being worshipped by supplicating to him and other such acts of worship, verily, they have strayed from the right path, and will be punished. Indeed,

such people no longer are counted as Muslims and have left the fold of Islam.

## 67. Why should Muslims not take the Jews and Christians as their supporters?

Many people are confused between the meaning of an alliance, which is prohibited and the duty of dealing with peaceful non-Muslims in a righteous and justice manner. Righteousness, justice, and good conduct are general laws in Islam, which are not to be differentiated between Muslims and others. Allah, the Exalted, says the Qur'ânic verse:

﴿ وَقُولُوا لِلنَّاسِ حُسْنًا ﴾ ( البقرة : ٨٣)

***And speak good to people (i.e. enjoin righteousness and forbid evil, and say the truth about Muhammad (Peace be upon him)).' (Al-Baqarah, 2:83).***

Allah, the Exalted, also says:

﴿ وَلَا تُجَادِلُوٓا أَهْلَ ٱلْكِتَـٰبِ إِلَّا بِٱلَّتِى هِىَ أَحْسَنُ ﴾ ( العنكبوت : ٤٦)

**And argue not with the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians), unless it be in (a way) that is better (with good words and in good manner, inviting them to Islamic Monotheism with His Verses).'**

**(Al-'Ankabût, 29:46)**

The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) also said, ***'Whoever wrongs a conventioneer or underestimates him or overburden him beyond his capability, I would be his opponent on the Day of Resurrection.*** The point to take note of here, is that Muslims are not permitted to support the unbelievers against the Muslims or take them as supporters.

The reason for this prohibition is very clear and logical and is agreed upon by people of all religions. Allah made a covenant with the Children of Israel that they should not shed the blood of their people, turn out their own people from their dwellings, nor assist (their enemies) against them, in sin and transgression. However, they did not keep Allah's covenant, and moreover, they divided themselves into two groups in Madinah; a group with Al-Aws and the other with Al-Khazraj. Wars used to take place between these two tribes. Each party fought with their allies; a Jew would kill his enemy or even a fellow Jew from the other party, drive them out from their homes, and rob their furniture, luggage and money. All these acts were prohibited in their religion according to the teachings of their Holy Book (the Torah). Therefore, Allah cursed and dispraised them in His Book saying:

﴿ وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَٰقَكُمْ لَا تَسْفِكُونَ دِمَآءَكُمْ وَلَا تُخْرِجُونَ أَنفُسَكُم مِّن دِيَٰرِكُمْ ثُمَّ
أَقْرَرْتُمْ وَأَنتُمْ تَشْهَدُونَ ﴿٨٤﴾ ثُمَّ أَنتُمْ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ تَقْتُلُونَ أَنفُسَكُمْ وَتُخْرِجُونَ
فَرِيقًا مِّنكُم مِّن دِيَٰرِهِمْ تَظَٰهَرُونَ عَلَيْهِم بِٱلْإِثْمِ وَٱلْعُدْوَٰنِ وَإِن يَأْتُوكُمْ أُسَٰرَىٰ

تُفَٰدُوهُمْ وَهُوَ مُحَرَّمٌ عَلَيْكُمْ إِخْرَاجُهُمْ أَفَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِبَعْضِ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ
وَتَكْفُرُونَ بِبَعْضٍ فَمَا جَزَآءُ مَن يَفْعَلُ ذَٰلِكَ مِنكُمْ إِلَّا خِزْىٌ فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ
ٱلدُّنْيَا وَيَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ يُرَدُّونَ إِلَىٰٓ أَشَدِّ ٱلْعَذَابِ وَمَا ٱللَّهُ بِغَٰفِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٨٥﴾
أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱشْتَرَوُا۟ ٱلْحَيَوٰةَ ٱلدُّنْيَا بِٱلْءَاخِرَةِ فَلَا يُخَفَّفُ عَنْهُمُ ٱلْعَذَابُ وَلَا هُمْ
يُنصَرُونَ ﴿٨٦﴾ ﴾ ( البقرة : ٨٤-٨٦)

**And (remember) when We took your covenant (saying): Shed not the blood of your people, nor turn out your own people from their dwellings. Then, (this) you ratified and (to this) you bear witness. After this, it is you who kill one another and drive out a party of you from their homes, assist (their enemies) against them, in sin and transgression. And if they come to you as captives, you ransom them, although their expulsion was forbidden to you. Then do you believe in a part of the Scripture and reject the rest? Then what is the recompense of those who do so among you, except disgrace in the life of this world, and on the Day of Resurrection they shall be consigned to the most grievous torment. And Allah is not unaware of what you do. Those are they who have bought the life of this world at the price of the Hereafter. Their torment shall not be lightened nor shall they be helped.'**

**(Al-Baqarah, 2: 84-86)**

Verily, the strangest thing was that whenever wars came to an end, they used to kill the captives of the defeated party which was a direct contradiction of the laws of the Torah, yet they used to set their own captives free following the laws of the Torah. Thereupon, Allah, the Exalted, says:

﴿ أَفَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِبَعْضِ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ وَتَكْفُرُونَ بِبَعْضٍ ﴾ ( البقرة : ٨٥)

**Then do you believe in a part of the Scripture and reject the rest?'**

What has been mentioned concerning the prohibition of supporting the unbelievers against the believers is not because of preference to a certain race or a certain party whether they are right or wrong, for the core of loyalty in Islam is adherence to the truth. Islam has set mankind free from prejudice to people of different races, colors or languages and strengthened their submission to the Righteousness that descended from Allah. Allah has also ordered mankind to be just and to admit the Oneness of Allah even if this cost them their souls, their parents, or their kith and kin. Pertaining to this rule, Allah does not differentiate between Muslims and non-Muslims, for this is a general law that addresses every person wherever he is on the earth. Muslims never support anyone who commits evil deeds; whether he is Muslim or not, an individual or a political entity, coming from East or West. Allah, the Exalted, says,

لَا تَجِدُ قَوْمًا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ يُوَادُّونَ مَنْ حَادَّ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَلَوْ كَانُوا آبَاءَهُمْ أَوْ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ أَوْ إِخْوَانَهُمْ أَوْ عَشِيرَتَهُمْ أُولَٰئِكَ كَتَبَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمُ الْإِيمَانَ وَأَيَّدَهُم بِرُوحٍ مِّنْهُ ﴿ ( المجادلة : ٢١)

**Allah has decreed: Verily! It is I and My Messengers who shall be the victorious. Verily, Allah is All-Powerful, All-Mighty.' (Al-Mujâdalah, 58: 21).**

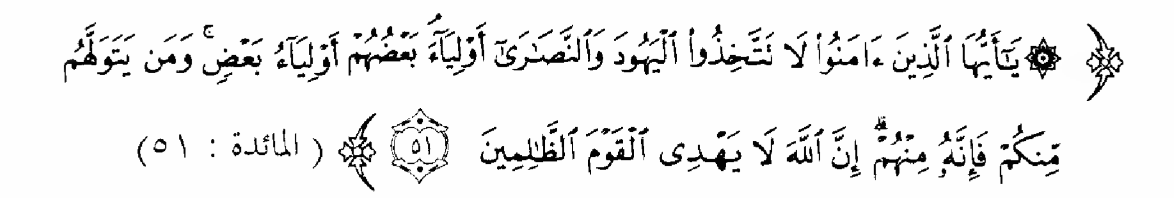
Thus, the issue is not the stance that the Muslim holds against the West in general and the United States in particular, but it is a general rule in which the East and West are equal. If a Muslim transgresses and does wrong, the only benefit which his fellow Muslim can offer him is to punish him and to prevent him from withholding justice, but never to act like him or encourage him, for whoever supports his people while doing wrong will be (accounted in the same way as him). The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said, "***He would, indeed, return to Allah bearing his sins***."

The prohibited المظاهرة refers to standing against the Muslims, and it has two conditions:

1. It must be made by some Muslim individuals or some parties not necessarily all of them, because Allah has saved the Muslim nation the trouble of being unanimous concerning evil deeds.

2. It must be against the believers of Allah and His Messenger (peace be upon him).

That is why At-Tabary, (may Allah be Merciful to him) said, in his explanation of the Statement of Allah which reads:



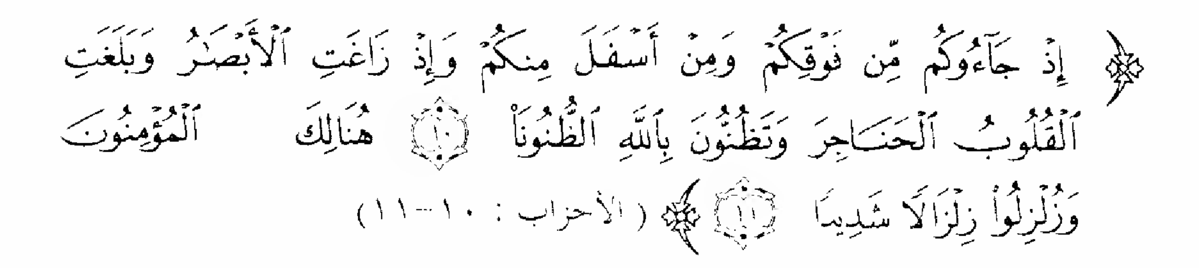
**O you who believe! Take not the Jews and the Christians as *Auliyâ'* (friends, protectors, helpers, etc.), they are but Auliyâ' to one another. And if any amongst you takes them as Auliyâ', then surely he is one of them. Verily, Allâh guides not those people who are the *Zâlimûn* (polytheists and wrong-doers and unjust).' (Al-Mâ'idah, 5:51)**

'What is more right is to say that Allah, the Exalted has forbidden all believers to take the Jews and the Christians as their supporters and allies against other believers of Allah and His Messenger (peace be upon him). Allah has also said that whoever takes the Jews and Christians as supporters and patrons instead of Allah, His Messenger (peace be upon him), and the believers, would belong to them in taking sides against Allah, His Messenger (peace be upon him) and other Muslims. In this case Allah and His Messenger (peace be upon him) would have no mercy upon him.'

## 68. Why did Muhammad, the Prophet, (peace be upon him) fight the Jews in Madinah when they did not accept his religion (i.e., Islam)?

This is definitely one of the false statements made by some Orientalists. Verily, the Prophet (peace be upon him) did not fight the Jews when they did not accept his religion but he fought them when they broke their treaties and promises, did not act according to the agreements that had been made, when they plotted many intrigues, and supported the unbelievers against the Muslims. When the Prophet (peace be upon him) came to Madinah, he concluded a truce with them that he would not fight them provided that they did not fight him. The Prophet (peace be upon him) kept the promises he had concluded with them but it was they who were traitors and betrayed these pacts. They were first to break their covenant. As a result, Allah sent down His unbearable Torment and inescapable Judgment.

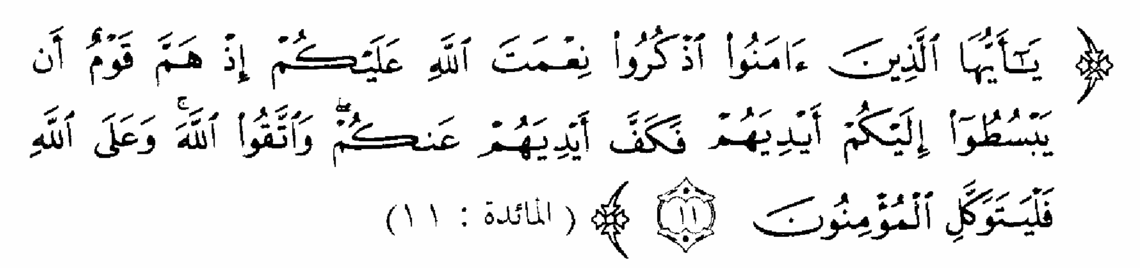
The Jews of the tribe of Banu Quraizhah supported the unbelievers of Mecca in the Battle of Al-Ahzâb. This was the battle in which the unbelievers agreed and cooperated in uprooting (and wiping out) the call for Islam. The Muslims had reached the state, which Allah described:



**When they came upon you from above you and from below you, and when the eyes grew wild and the hearts reached to the throats, and you were harboring doubts about Allah. There, the believers were tried and shaken with a mighty shaking.' (Al-Ahzâb, 33:10-11)**

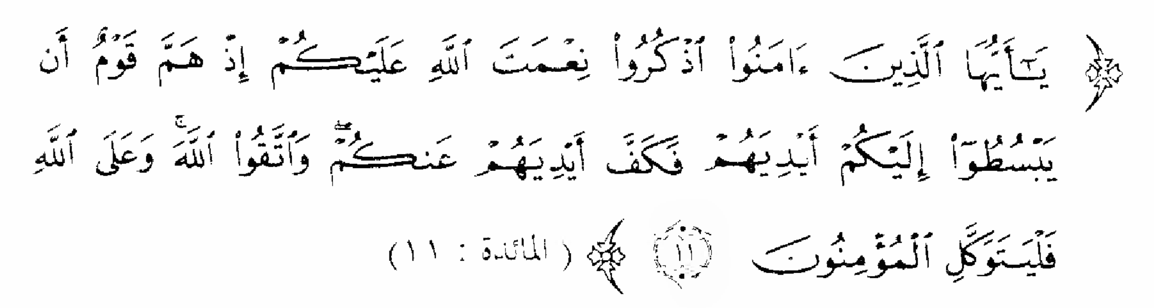
Allah then punished them and sent his Torment upon them.

The Jews of the Banu An-Nadîr tribe broke their promises and intended to kill the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) deceitfully, when he went to them carrying the blood money of two killed persons from their tribe. When the Prophet (peace be upon him) was standing beside a wall of one of their houses, they agreed to throw a rock on him from above the wall. But Allah revealed the whole matter to him and thus saved him from their evil. Consequently, the Prophet (peace be upon him) expelled them from Madinah. Allah, the Exalted, says:



**O you who believe! Remember the Favor of Allâh unto you when some people desired (made a plan) to stretch out their hands against you, but (Allâh) withheld their hands from you. So fear Allâh. And in Allah let believers put their trust.' (Al-Mâ'idah, 5:11)**

The blessing which Allah granted His believing slaves in this verse is that Allah saved His Prophet, Muhammad (peace be upon him) and his Companions from the plot of the Jews of the Banu An-Nadîr tribe, when he went to them along with his Companions to give them the blood money of two persons from the Banu 'Umar tribe who were murdered by 'Amr bin Umayyah Ad-Damry. When he reached them, they gathered secretly and said to each other, "We will never find Muhammad nearer to us than he is now. So we command a man to go up to the roof of the house and throw a rock on him, thus we will get rid of him." Thereupon, 'Amr bin Jahhâsh bin Ka'b got up and took the responsibility of doing this evil deed. The news reached the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him), and so he left. Allah, Glorified be He revealed a certain verse concerning this matter, :



**'O you who believe! Remember the Favor of Allâh unto you when some people desired (made a plan) to stretch out their hands against you, but (Allâh) withheld their hands from you. So fear Allâh. And in Allah let believers put their trust.' (Al-Mâ'idah, 5:11)**

So the issue was not a matter of compelling the Jews to embrace Islam, but it was the natural consequence of their continuous conspiracies, intrigues, and betrayal. **69. Why were the nations in countries, that the Muslims conquered, compelled to embrace Islam?**

This is one of the false statements which were responded to by the Glorious Qur'ân on one hand and historical events on the other. In the Glorious Qur'ân, Allah, the Exalted, says:

﴿ لَآ إِكْرَاهَ فِى ٱلدِّينِ ۖ قَد تَّبَيَّنَ ٱلرُّشْدُ مِنَ ٱلْغَىِّ ۚ ﴾ ( البقرة : ٢٥٦ )

**There is no compulsion in religion. Verily, the Right Path has become distinct from the wrong path.'**

**(Al-Baqarah, 2:256)**

In the realm of historical events we find clear evidence that no one can deny. One the most important pieces of

evidence that indicate that there is no compulsion in Islam is that people from all over the Western world are embracing Islam despite all the negative media images and propaganda.

## 70. Why do the Muslims not permit the non-Muslims to live among them and to spread their art and culture?

Non-Muslims have lived among Muslims since the advent of Islam. Many of them have occupied high positions that Muslims never aspired to. Their churches were built very high. They had many books and publishing houses that no one can ignore. In Egypt, it happened that many Muslims began to call for justice in the treatment between Muslims and Egyptian Copts. All over the world, no one can find such a pampered minority. There is a feeling of tolerance adopted by Muslims toward non-Muslims out of willingness and without compulsion.

## 71. Why did the Muslims destroy churches and Jewish temples?

This question seems to be in conformity with the Arabic poet who said, "She hurts me and then she left me alone." This question arises at the time when Sharon is destroying both mosques and churches with the help and under the Protection of American power. It is also the time when Hindus are destroying

mosques in India, and many other bloody and brutal incidents have taken place before the eyes of the whole world.

The general Islamic principle in dealing with non-Muslims is to grant them the free will to worship whatever they choose. This in turn, necessitates total freedom for them to practice their rituals and maintain the sanctity of their places of worship, be it churches or synagogues. It prevents any one from causing any harm to them. Moreover, if anyone attempts to cause unwarranted damage, he will be submitted to punishment in accordance with the law, which will render him back to righteousness willingly or otherwise. Perhaps then, it is better to ask this question in its opposite form. There can be no beneficial discussion without fairness.

## 72. Why do Muslims tend to distrust the Non-Muslims?

Non-Muslims are not all alike. Some are trustworthy and others are not. They are like all other people. In every community, there are the righteous and the malicious, as Allah, the Exalted and Ever-Majestic, says:

﴿ وَمِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ مَنْ إِن تَأْمَنْهُ بِقِنطَارٍ يُؤَدِّهِ إِلَيْكَ وَمِنْهُم مَّنْ إِن تَأْمَنْهُ بِدِينَارٍ لَّا يُؤَدِّهِ إِلَيْكَ إِلَّا مَا دُمْتَ عَلَيْهِ قَائِمًا ﴾ ( آل عمران : ٧٥)

**Among the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) is he who, if entrusted with a *kantar* (a great amount of wealth, etc.), will readily pay it back;**

**and among them there is he who, if entrusted with a single silver coin, will not repay it unless you constantly stand demanding.' (Âli-'Imrân, 3:75)**

If the general rule is as you claim, Muslims would have never made covenants with them. Allah, the Exalted, has spoken about the Christians in particular in the Qur'ânic verse:

﴿ ۞ لَتَجِدَنَّ أَشَدَّ ٱلنَّاسِ عَدَٰوَةً لِّلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱلْيَهُودَ وَٱلَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا۟ وَلَتَجِدَنَّ أَقْرَبَهُم مَّوَدَّةً لِّلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱلَّذِينَ قَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّا نَصَٰرَىٰ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّ مِنْهُمْ قِسِّيسِينَ وَرُهْبَانًا وَأَنَّهُمْ لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾ ﴾ ( المائدة : ٨٢)

**Verily, you will find the strongest among men in enmity to the believers (Muslims) the Jews and those who are Al-*Mushrikûn* (see V.2:105), and you will find the nearest in love to the believers (Muslims) those who say: We are Christians. That is because amongst them are priests and monks, and they are not proud.'**

**(Al-Mâ'idah, 5:82)**

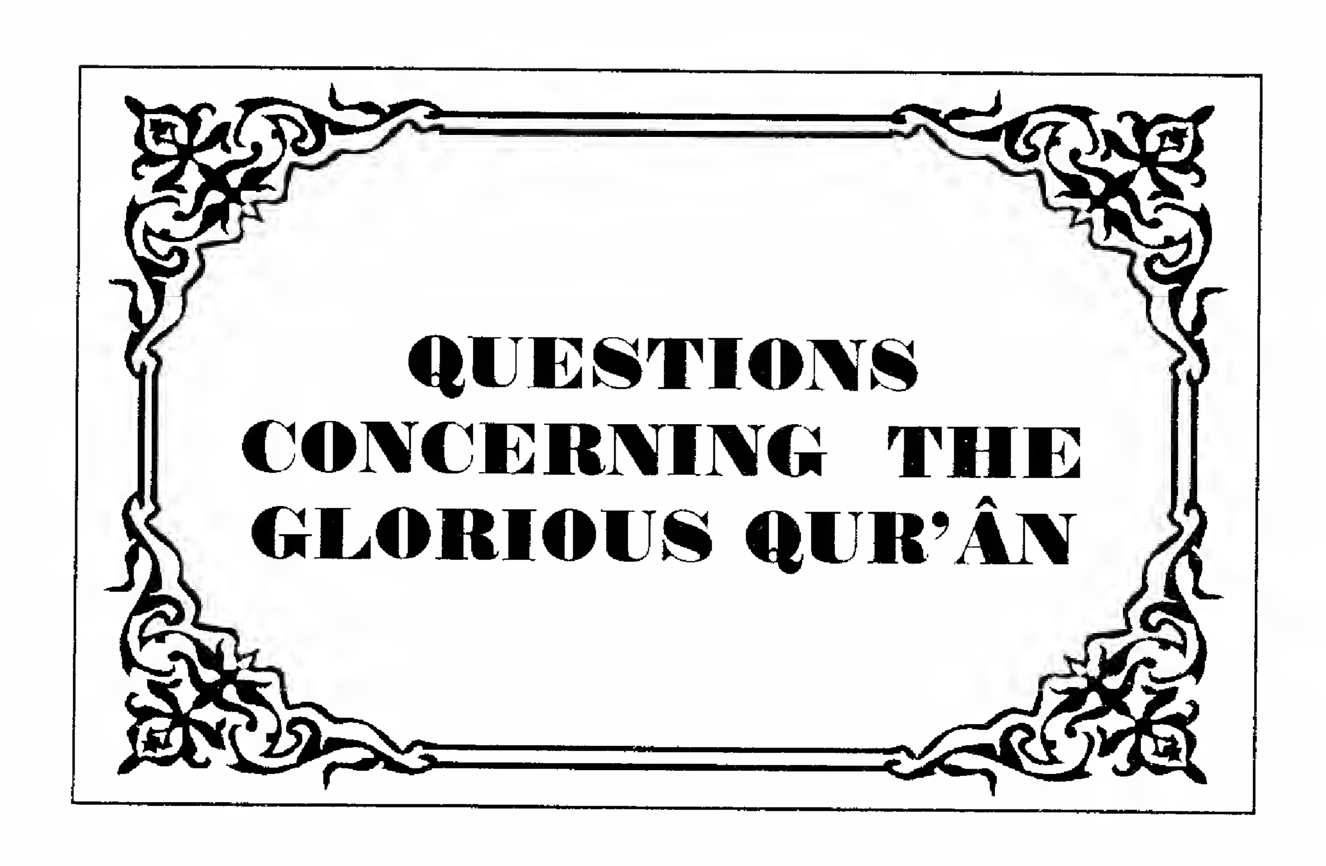
## 73. Will the Muslims enter Paradise if they fight the non-Muslims?

Essentially, the Muslims are a nation meant to convey the Message of Allah. Their aim is to deliver mankind from mere worship of servants like themselves to worshipping Allah alone, and from the narrowness of this world to the spaciousness

of this world and the Hereafter, and from the injustice of religions to the equity of Islam. Whoever makes peace with their delivered message and offers them peace, then Allah has opened no way for the Muslim against him. Since *Jihad* is based on championing the cause of the oppressed and repelling assailants, it is lawful to be practiced and any attempt to fulfill its aims will not be a source of evil, arrogance or assault. When practiced according to the true teachings of Islam, it becomes a path that opens the way to Paradise if the intentions of its participants are sincerely devoted to uplifting the Word of Allah. Moreover, many Islamic scholars disapproved of calling the ones killed in a battle as 'martyrs' because the decisive issue in that matter is one's intention, which is something known only by Allah, the Exalted. None masters the knowledge of the secrets enclosed within the hearts of man except the All-Knower of the unknown.

## 74. Why do the Muslims not permit the message of Christianity and Christian missionaries to exist among them in Mecca for instance?

That is the Decree of Allah, the Exalted and Ever-Majestic, and His Wisdom is manifest; that the core of Islam and its first cradle remains pure for the call for truth, away from the impurities of polytheism. Allah judges and there is none to dismiss His Judgment.


QUESTIONS
CONCERNING THE
GLORIOUS QUR'ÂN

## 75. Who wrote down the Qur'ân?

The Honorable Qur'ân is the Book of Allah, the Exalted and Ever-Majestic, which the trustworthy Rûh [Jibrîl (Gabriel)] brought down upon the heart of the final messenger (Muhammad, peace be upon him). It was revealed piece meal throughout twenty-three years, which is the lifetime of the Prophetic mission. The Prophet (peace be upon him) was unlettered; could neither read nor write nor count but he chose some of his companions to write down the Divine Inspiration as 'Aly, Mu'âwayyah, Zaid bin Thâbit and Ubay bin Ka'b (may Allah be pleased with them all). The Honorable Qur'ân was written down entirety during the lifetime of the Prophet (peace be upon him). Also, a group from his Companions memorized it , and so what was enclosed in the hearts was verified by what was written down.

## 76. Did not Muhammad (peace be upon him) learn the Qur'ân at the hands of the Jews and the Christians whom he has known before he claimed to be a Prophet?

How today is akin to yesterday! It is a very old accusation, which the infidels forged during the time o the f prophet and the Honorable Qur'ân recorded it and answered its authors in the most eloquent and concise retort. Allah, the Exalted, says:

﴿ وَلَقَدْ نَعْلَمُ أَنَّهُمْ يَقُولُونَ إِنَّمَا يُعَلِّمُهُۥ بَشَرٌ لِّسَانُ ٱلَّذِى يُلْحِدُونَ إِلَيْهِ أَعْجَمِىٌّ وَهَٰذَا لِسَانٌ عَرَبِىٌّ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١٠٣﴾ ﴾ (النحل : ١٠٣)

**And indeed We know that they (polytheists and pagans) say: "It is only a human being who teaches him (Muhammad)." The tongue of the man they refer to is foreign, while this (the Qur'ân) is a clear Arabic tongue.' (An-Nahl, 16: 103)**

For Allah, Whose mention reigns high, says (in the Qur'ânic verse what means) that He well knows that those unbelievers speak out of their ignorance and say, 'No doubt, the one who teaches Muhammad that which he recites is none but a human being from the children of Adam and it is not from Allah.' And Allah, Whose mention reigns high, belies them in their fabricated statements and says to them (through the Qur'ânic verses what means), 'Do not you know the falsehood of what you are saying? The tongue of the man you refer to and claims that he teaches Muhammad is foreign. That is because based on what was mentioned, they used to claim that the one who taught Muhammad that Qur'ân was a roman slave. In this context Allah, the Exalted, says:

﴿ لِّسَانُ ٱلَّذِى يُلْحِدُونَ إِلَيْهِ أَعْجَمِىٌّ وَهَٰذَا لِسَانٌ عَرَبِىٌّ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١٠٣﴾ ﴾

(النحل : ١٠٣)

**The tongue of the man they refer to is foreign, while this (the Qur'ân) is a clear Arabic tongue.'**

**(An-Nahl, 16: 103)**

## 77. Do the Muslims believe that the Qur'ân is the exact Speech of Allah, letter for letter and word for word?

Yes, they do, and all Muslims have agreed upon that. Whoever doubts that or belies it, has left the fold of Islam.

## 78. How could the Muslims believe that the Qur'ân is the exact Speech of Allah when it is well known that it is a book compiled and written down after Muhammad (peace be upon him), that is to say after his death?

The Honorable Qur'ân was written down in its entirety during the lifetime of the Prophet (peace be upon him) as he chose scribes from among his honorable companions as: 'Aly, Mu'âwayyah, Zaid bin Thâbit and Ubay bin Ka'b (may Allah be pleased with them all). When a Qur'ânic verse was revealed he used to command them to write it down and guide them to its place in the Chapter of the Qur'ân so that the written lines would confirm what was memorized in the hearts. Even more, some among the Companions used to write down what was revealed of the Qur'ân from their own accord without being commanded to do so by the Prophet (peace be upon him). They also used to show the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him)

what they had of the Qur'ân, whether memorized or written down. What was written down during the lifetime of the Prophet (peace be upon him) was not gathered into one common manuscript but a number of people were in possession of their own personal copies. Religious scholars also reported that some from among the Companions gathered the Qur'ân entirely during the lifetime of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) and Jibrîl (Gabriel) used to review the Qur'ân with the Prophet (peace be upon him) each year during the nights of Ramadan until the year in which he passed away. In the final year of the Prophet's life, Jibrîl reviewed the Qur'ân with him twice.

There are a number of reasons why the Honorable Qur'ân was not compiled into one common manuscript during the lifetime of the Prophet (peace be upon him) even though there were those who had memorized it by heart:

- When the Prophet (peace be upon him) was alive he was constantly awaiting the revelation of the Divine Inspiration.
- There were also some rules that were abrogated and the Prophet (peace be upon him) pointed out all these things.
- The order of its revelation did not pursue the same order that was agreed upon at the end, rather than that, after a Qur'ânic verse was revealed it was written down and the Prophet (peace be upon him)

used to point out the place where it should be written between such and such verse in such Chapter. If the entire Qur'ân was gathered between the two coverings of a single common manuscript it would have resulted in carrying changes every time something was revealed or the recitation of some of its verses was abrogated.

- Then the Qur'ân was collected two times:
- The first was during the lifetime of Abû-Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) and that happened when the many companions who had memorized the Qur'ân were killed at the war of Al-Yamâmah, and the Companions feared lest something from the Qur'ân might be lost through the loss (death) of those who had memorized it. Therefore, Abû-Bakr was the most greatly rewarded among all people with regards to the manuscripts of the Glorious Qur'ân, for he was the first to gather the Book of Allah in one manuscript with organized verses and Chapters, besides its being restricted on that whose recitation was not abrogated as well as comprising the seven dialects whereby the Book of Allah, the Exalted and Ever-Majestic, was revealed. These manuscripts remained with the Mother of the Believers, Hafsah bint 'Umar bin Al-Khattâb (may Allah be pleased with them).

- The second was during the lifetime of 'Uthmân (may Allah be pleased with him). When the Companions separated into different countries and the people of every country adopted the recitation of those who were delegated to teach them, the Companions dreaded the disunity of the nation owing to the variation in the manners of recitation. Thereon, 'Uthmân sent to the Mother of the Believers, Hafsah (may Allah be pleased with her), and asked her to give him the manuscripts in order to transcribe them and later to return them to her. Thus, at that time the manuscripts were written down in conformity with one of the seven dialects whereby the Glorious Qur'ân was revealed and the papers were rendered back to Hafsah, then a manuscript was sent to every faraway land and one was kept in Madinah, which posed as the manuscript known as the Imam.

Consequently, the compilation of the Qur'ân during the lifetime of Abû-Bakr was no precedence for writing it down but it was a sort of assemblage to that which was already inscribed and an organization of it as well as preserving it in one compilation. As for its compilation during the lifetime of 'Uthmân, it was achieved with the aim of transcribing copies of it and generalizing it in different Islamic countries; it was more like a publication according to our contemporary terminology. Abû-Bakr prepared the origin, organized it and revised it,

whereas 'Uthmân handled its propagation and generalization throughout the nation, hence Allah was pleased with all. So it seems that the questioner has mixed between writing and compiling and the case simply follows the aforementioned details.

## 79. Why do we find the Qur'ân hard to understand owing to the fact that its chapters, narratives and subjects are not organized in an appropriate order?

Allah has indeed made the Qur'ân easy to understand and remember. He has caused its memorization and the contemplation of its meaning to be easy for whom He wills. Besides, the relations correlating the Qur'ânic chapters have their own mysterious and miraculous nature, which outstanding men of knowledge have already discussed. Burhân Ad-Dîn Al-Biqâ'y had a highly esteemed book known as Threading Pearls in Arranging Verses and Chapters in which he clarified the mysteries and the niceties that exist between the Qur'ânic chapters and which set the hearts and minds at wonder. To fully appreciate these wonders a thorough understanding of the Arabic language is required. For this reason, non-Arabs need some time to grasp these meanings and perceive them.

## 80. Since there exist many translations of the Glorious Qur'ân, which do you consider as an official and approved translation among the Muslims?

Translating the meanings of the Glorious Qur'ân is equivalent to the interpretation of the Book of Allah, the Exalted and Ever-Majestic, as the Muslims concurred that the Honorable Qur'ân is the Arabic wording that was sent down upon Muhammad (peace be upon him) and worshipping Allah through its recitation. The translations which mankind had made for its meanings are not a Qur'ân as such and the rules of the Noble Qur'ân do not run on them. For instance, purity is not stipulated for reading them and they do not fulfill the role of recitation in offering Prayers, beside other rules connected with the Book of Allah, the Exalted and Ever-Majestic. They only serve as interpretations for it as well as an explanation of its meanings. Naturally, they are the work of human beings to which negligence and non-perfection exist.

In short, translations should be handled the same as the books of interpretation, some are more accurate than others as things naturally are, but they do not possess the exactness and the infallibility of the Glorious Qur'ân itself, which is the Arabic wording sent down upon Muhammad (peace be upon him).

## 81. Why does the Qur'ân use the word 'We' when talking about Allah?

All native speakers of Arabic know that the plural form as نحن – نا used to refer to two persons or more can be used by a great or a proud person to denote his greatness. The context itself, the necessities of the situation, and what the narrative encloses of evidence are what direct the reader and the listener to the purport and the designated meaning. Furthermore, Allah, the Exalted and Ever-Majestic, has singled out pride and absolute greatness only for Himself, thus using that term likewise does not contradict except a starkly ignorant person whom realities has been obscured from his sight or a tenacious liar who aims at confusion and displacement of words from their right places! Besides, conclusive evidence has been established on the absolute Oneness of Allah, the Exalted and Ever-Majestic, in His High Self, His Attributes and His Deeds and on this base, Islam is built. Moreover, such a case has its analogue in our contemporary life, for constitutions and laws when being issued by a king or the president of the state still employ the word 'we'.

## 82. Why does the Qur'ân depict Paradise as a place of pleasures and satisfaction of desires, such as thrones, garments, food and drink, several *houris* and so forth? Do not contentment and forgiveness suffice?

Allah has gathered two joys for His believing servants in Paradise: corporeal and incorporeal, thus He prepared for His servants what an eye has not ever seen, or an ear has not ever heard or ever crossed the heart of a human, and He promised them to look at His Honorable Countenance and to send down His Contentment on them, thereafter He shall never be angry with them and that is the absolute perfection and culmination of bliss. Allah, the Exalted, says:

﴿ لِّلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا الْحُسْنَىٰ وَزِيَادَةٌ ﴾ (يونس : ٢٦)

**For those who have done good is the best (reward, i.e. Paradise) and even more (i.e. having the honor of glancing at the Countenance of Allah).' (Yûnus, 10: 26)**

The best reward is Paradise and the surplus is the honor of glancing at the Countenance of Allah, the Exalted, and to have His Contentment sent down upon them, thereafter He shall never be angry with them. No doubt that the delights of Paradise dwindle compared to such contentment and such transcendent blessings.

Abû Mûsâ Al-'Asha'ry (may Allah be pleased with him) delivered a sermon from the Basra pulpit in which he said,

"Verily, on the Day of Resurrection Allah will send an angel to the inhabitants of Paradise saying to them, 'O people of Paradise! Has Allah fulfilled what He has promised you?' Thus they will look at what Allah has prepared for them of honors; beholding the adornments, the garments, the fruits, the rivers, and the purified mates and they will reply, 'Yes, Allah has fulfilled what He has promised us.' Then the angel will say thrice, 'Has Allah fulfilled what He has promised you?' And they will lack nothing of what they had been promised, so they will say, 'Yes.' Then he (the angel) will say, 'But still there remain something (stored) for you.' Allah, the Almighty, says:

﴿ لِّلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا الْحُسْنَىٰ وَزِيَادَةٌ ﴾ (يونس : ٢٦)

**For those who have done good is the best (reward, i.e. Paradise) and even more (i.e. having the honor of glancing at the Countenance of Allah).' (Yûnus, 10: 26)**

Truly, The best reward is Paradise and the surplus is the honor of glancing at the Countenance of Allah."

Furthermore, Abdur-Rahmân bin Abû Lailâ was asked about the Saying of Allah:

﴿ لِّلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا الْحُسْنَىٰ وَزِيَادَةٌ ﴾ (يونس : ٢٦)

**For those who have done good is the best (reward, i.e. Paradise) and even more (i.e. having the honor of glancing at the Countenance of Allah).' (Yûnus, 10: 26)**

Thus it was said to him, 'Have you heard His Saying (what means): For those who have done good is the best (reward, i.e. Paradise) and even more (i.e. having the honor of glancing at the Countenance of Allah) (Yûnus, 10: 26)?' He replied, 'When the inhabitants of Paradise are admitted into Paradise and are offered what will be conferred on them of bounties and delights, it will be cried out to them, 'O people of Paradise! Truly, Allah has promised you even more.' Thereon, He will reveal Himself to them.'"

Ibn Abû Lailâ added, "Imagine them, when their scales of good deeds outweighed, and have already received their records in their right hand (denoting a mild reckoning) and have already crossed the bridge of Hellfire and entered Paradise and are offered what will be conferred on them of bounties and delights? All that will amount to nothing compared to what they shall be made to see."

## 83. Please, explain to us in detail the prescribed penalties for adultery, theft and apostasy in the Islamic law.

As we cannot cultivate a certain plant away from its suitable soil, so we cannot also produce an Islamic legal decision away from other related regulations and judge it according to irreligious norms. The accusation, which is usually directed to the legal penalties of Islam, is that they are extremely harsh and strict. In order to distinguish between what is true and what is false in this accusation, we have to put forward these facts:

The philosophy of penalization in Islamic law is based on two essential concepts: fighting the psychological factors which call for crime, and promoting positive reasons which prevent it and make man dispense with committing it. People inherently weigh between what is beneficial and what is harmful, so if the penalty of a certain crime is light, people who are inclined to commit it will take the penalty lightly; as it will not create enough deterrence to dissuade them from committing crimes. Thus, within the societies, which apply Islamic law, crime decreased and moreover, the incidents of returning to crime are scarce, whereas incidences of such crimes in modern irreligious societies are far more in number. From this we deduce that the real benefit behind Islamic penalties is found in their threatening nature not in the actual execution of the penalty.

These Islamic prescribed penalties represent a ring in the complete chain of laws and regulations, which are closely related, so they must be wholly practiced, therefore it is indeed wrong and harmful if we execute some of its laws and exclude others. 'Umar bin Al-Khattâb asked one of his governors once, "What will you do if a thief is brought to you?" He replied, "I will cut off his hand." 'Umar said to him, "Then if any of your subjects come to me starving, I will cut off your hand!" People have rights, so once they are completely fulfilled, we can ask them to fulfill their obligations and subject them to the legally prescribed penalties of Allah that are related to people's rights. That was why the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) did

not execute the prescribed penalties in the year of Ar-Ramâdah (a year in which a severe drought occurred ) when poverty prevailed, for fear that the destitute would not be known from among the thieves.

The prescribed penalty for adultery, for example, can not be executed except within a complete system of Islamic legislative rules, among which are the following:

- Exhortation to marriage through facilitating its procedures and supporting it whether from the money of charity or the public treasury of Muslims.
- Permissibility of divorce through facilitating its procedures, in the absence of willingness to continue marital life, but stating that it is the most lawful thing that is hated by Allah, the Exalted. This is because complicating the procedures of divorce may result in preferring having mistresses and boyfriends as an escape from the consequences of divorce.
- Permitting Khul'a(divorce at the instance of the wife) in cases of extreme need for it, like when a wife strongly dislikes her husband and feels that it is impossible to continue living with him. This is in addition to the legislation of a woman's right to achieve divorce for sustained damage in cases like the absence of the husband, his poverty and disability to sustain her or his impotence. But it should be stressed that a woman who asks her husband to divorce her without due reason will not be able

to smell the fragrance of Paradise, and that women who divorce themselves with Khul'a without due reason are hypocrites.

- Enjoining lowering one's gaze from looking at forbidden people and adhering to chastity in one's appearance and behavior. The Forbiddance of: adorning oneself for the purpose of tempting the opposite sex, having privacy with a woman lawful to marry, the traveling of women without being accompanied by an unmarriageable male kin, indecent songs or pictures, provoking talk and all that which arouses seduction and base instincts.

- Permitting having more than one wife provided that there is a true need for it. In such a case, justice should be observed and the ability to provide for a larger family should exist.

- Adhering to extreme accuracy in verifying the offence of adultery, for this crime is proven by the witness of four reliable men who must have seen the crime of adultery as clear as broad daylight. However, if one of them hesitates in testifying, all four should receive the penalty of slander, which is eighty lashes in addition to declaring the invalidity of their testimony, unless they repent. The other cases in which adultery is proven are the following: Firstly, when an unmarried woman gets pregnant unless she claims that she has been raped, this will prevent executing the penalty on her. Secondly, when a person

makes an uncompelled confession, but if he recants, the penalty can not be executed.

- The forbiddance of spying and disclosing others' secrets as well as the spread of an attitude of protecting and concealing one's fellow Muslim on the one hand, and restricting vice as well as asserting the gravity of damaging other's reputations on the other It should be said that whoever screens his Muslim brother will be as if he has brought life to a female infant buried alive (as the pagan Arabs used to do), and that he who discloses the committing of a crime, the penalty becomes incumbent upon him. But he who closes his door on him and commits sins, his reckoning and punishment will be with Allah and no one can harm him without enough evidence. A harsh penalty should be legislated for he, who falsely accuses someone of adultery and fails to bring enough evidence.
- Executing a penalty based on dubious evidence is averted. Such evidence is enough to vindicate a person and not to execute the penalty on him, for a ruler's mistake of pardoning is lighter than his mistake of punishing an innocent person.

Within such a system, the prescribed penalty of adultery becomes applicable, which distinguishes between the married person and the single person. As regards the married person, a harsh penalty is prescribed , but the unmarried person receives a lightened penalty. From the practical point of view, we find that

the penalty for committing adultery is scarcely practiced because of the absence of the motives for adultery on the one hand, and the difficulty of proving it on the other. But the real value behind the penalty remains, which lies mainly in its threatening, and frightening people from committing it but not in its actual execution.

As for the prescribed penalty for apostasy and that which is alleged about it, here are some facts that will prove the falsity of many allegations:

The general concept in Islam is:

﴿ لَآ إِكۡرَاهَ فِي ٱلدِّينِۖ قَد تَّبَيَّنَ ٱلرُّشۡدُ مِنَ ٱلۡغَيِّۚ ﴾ ( البقرة : ٢٥٦)

**There is no compulsion in religion. Verily, the Right Path has become distinct from the wrong path."**

**(Al-Baqarah, 2: 256)**

Thus it is not permissible to compel anyone to embrace Islam, for Allah, the Exalted, says to His Prophet (peace be upon him):

﴿ وَلَوۡ شَآءَ رَبُّكَ لَأٓمَنَ مَن فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ كُلُّهُمۡ جَمِيعًاۚ أَفَأَنتَ تُكۡرِهُ ٱلنَّاسَ حَتَّىٰ يَكُونُواْ مُؤۡمِنِينَ ٩٩ ﴾ ( يونس : ٩٩)

**And had your Lord willed, those on earth would have believed, all of them together. So, will you (O**

**Muhammad) then compel mankind, until they become believers."** **(Yûnus, 10: 99)**

- Whoever chooses to remain embracing his religion and be a non-Muslim within the Islamic community enjoys the protection of the Islamic state, under the general rule, which stresses on allowing non-Muslims to practice their religion freely. He also enjoys the different utilities in that country and is guaranteed the protection of Allah and his Messenger. He possesses rights, which can not be violated under any circumstances. This will be in return for his participation in lightening the financial burdens of the Islamic state by not violating its general sanctities.

- If any of the non-Muslims wants to embrace Islam, he can do so after being absolutely sure of his decision and of the seriousness of his choice, for fear that different religions would be a means to attain some human desires or material gains. For it is not lawful to desert this religion after choosing and declaring one's belief in it and one's alliance to its community.

- After embracing Islam, if one has doubts about it and these doubts lead him to apostate, he has the right to eliminate his doubts through calm conversation, the one which the people of knowledge call 'request for repentance'. This is done in a manner that is very far from threatening, and in addition to that, he has the right to ask to be left until his doubts are gone regardless of how long this may take!

- Whoever abandons his religion and keeps his apostasy within himself, none can do him any harm, because the Islamic ruling system does not account a person for what he commits secretly and keeps within himself alone.

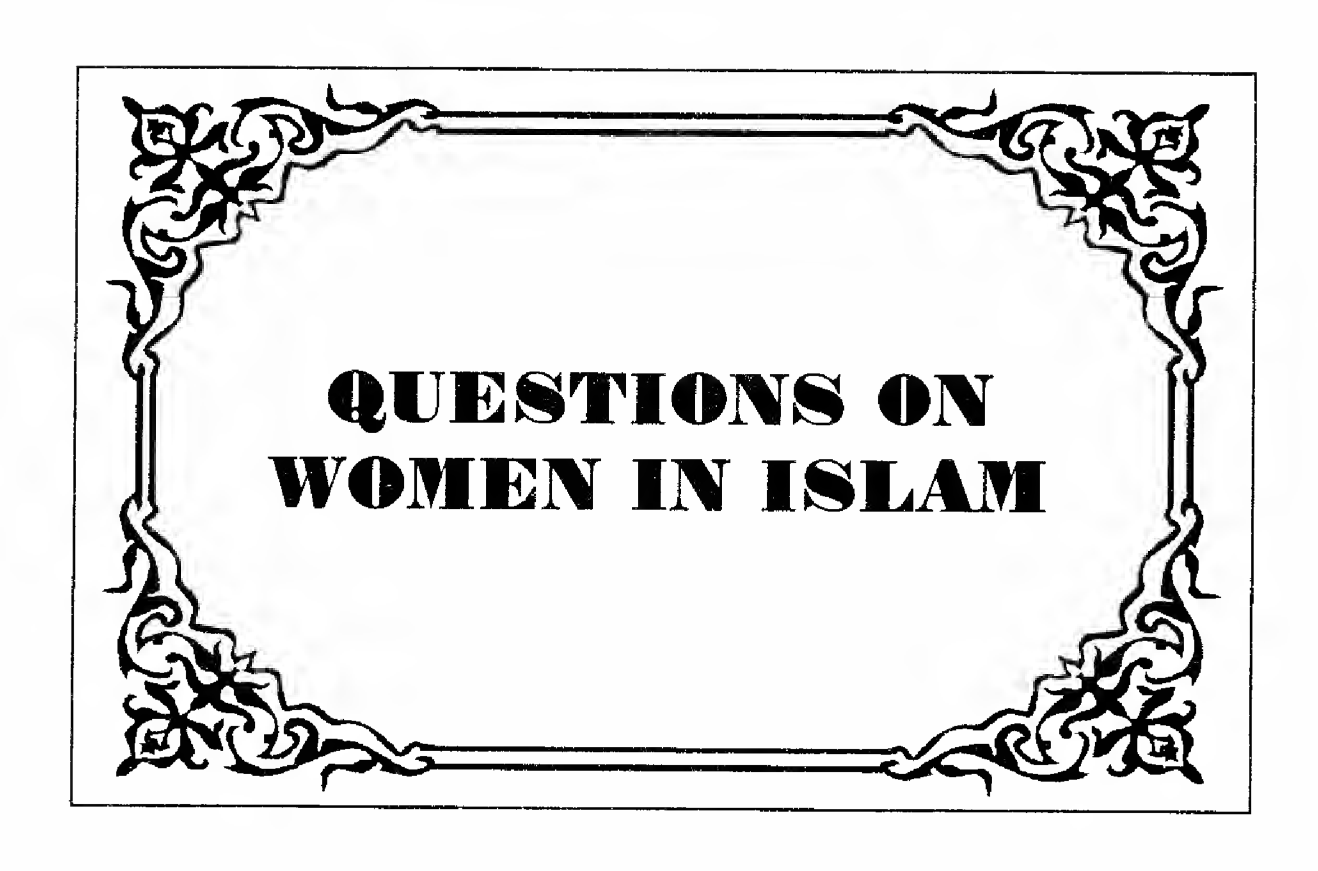
- As for he who declares his apostasy and insists on it, even after receiving the request of repentance from people of knowledge, and having displayed the falsity of his doubts and being absolutely sure of his apostasy, the majority of the religious scholars say that he should be killed. But some of them say that he should not be killed except after rejecting the sovereignty of the country's ruler, declaring rebellion and fighting against the country; the same as it was in the reign of Abû Bakr As-Siddîq. This opinion is attributed to Ibn Taimiyah, the Shaikh of Islam, in his treatise about fighting. But there are doubts as to whether this opinion is really his.

- The reason behind having such a penalty for apostasy is that religions should not be taken lightly or as means to establish goals and gain worldly desires. All countries punish those who commit high treason with execution, and no one has ever opposed this, claiming that it is against human rights or freedom of choice. Islam represents a state as well as a religion, where the religion is the core of the state, and there can be no separation between religion and worldly life, or between faith and law. Thus, apostasy from Islam means rebellion against the state and high treason to its mission, concepts and role in life. A party of the Jews

said: "Believe in the morning in that which is revealed to the believers (Muslims), and reject it at the end of the day, so that they may turn back," so as to be a bad example for those who want to embrace Islam and an affliction to its followers. For some might say, "If this religion was really true, why have those who embraced it and delved into it abandoned it?" Therefore, the penalty of apostasy was prescribed so as to close the door on the attempts of the enemies of Islam, and stress the sanctity of Islam and Muslims. But this penalty is not executed except after a long chain of procedures, after which not many will remain without reverting to Islam. That is why the incidents of executing this penalty are very few in the history of Islamic government.

It may be difficult for a western mind to understand this, because it is accustomed to drawing a separation between religion and politics, and the matter of apostasy in religion so why is the state involved in it? But from the point of view of Islam, there is no separation between Islam and the state, for the state in Islam is founded on the bases of Islamic laws and faith, and they both have the same sublime source. The penalty of apostasy in the Christian community, is a penalty imposed by the church and is mainly expulsion and deprivation from the kingdom of the Lord. Thus, it is a kind of spiritual and moral execution for the apostate, and the state has nothing to do in the matter, because there is no relation between the state and religious affairs and the life of the hereafter. The spiritual

execution practiced by the church authority can be likened to the physical execution that is stated in Islamic law after doing all the aforementioned attempts and requests for repentance. This is due to the absence of separation between worldly life and religion within the system of Islamic thinking.

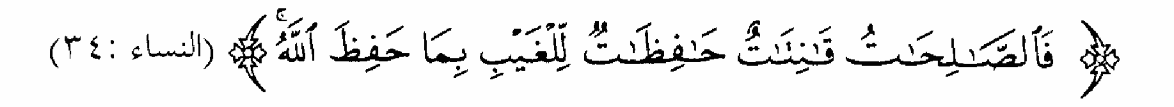

QUESTIONS ON
WOMEN IN ISLAM

## 84. What is the role of the Muslim woman in Islam?

The Muslim woman is given more respect and integrity than women of other religious communities. She is the most entitled to live a good virtuous life in this world. This is in addition to the great reward she has been promised in the Hereafter. This is what happens if people understand Islam and apply its rules correctly on one hand, and also if they handled its terms in the right way by comparing its concepts with those of justice and objectivity. Nowadays integrity and freedom are sometimes interpreted as the right to take boyfriends and to indulge in vice, or as the right to practice lesbianism or sodomy and freeing oneself from every religious and moral norm! Others interpret them as the right to commit suicide or endanger oneself! The points below give a quick outline of the most important tasks that the Muslim woman should undertake and at how Islam honors her.

### The woman is a guardian of her husband's house

She is a source of repose to her husband and a guard over his property and children. She represents the first school that the children attend. If she is righteous, her offspring will more likely be righteous, but if she is not, her children will be as if they are on a ship vulnerable to the winds, tornados and storms! Allah, the Exalted, says:



**Therefore the righteous women are devoutly obedient (to Allah and to their husbands), and guard in the husband's absence what Allah orders them to guard (e.g. their chastity, their husband's property, etc.)"**

**(An-Nisâ', 4: 34)**

This means that women should be pious, obedient to their husbands and should guard themselves and their husband's property. That is to say, they should preserve their chastity, by abstaining from committing adultery, preserve their reputation and not to reveal their secrets to people. The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said, ***"A wife is a guardian in her husband's house (i.e. over herself, his children and his property) and she is responsible for those whom she guards."***

Abû Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

**The best amongst wives is she who pleases you when you look at her, obeys you if you order her and guards her chastity as well as your property when you are away from her." Then the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) recited this Verse:**

﴿ ٱلرِّجَالُ قَوَّٰمُونَ عَلَى ٱلنِّسَآءِ ﴾ (النساء : ٣٤)

**This means, "Men are the protectors and maintainers of women..." (An-Nisâ', 4:34)**

The Muslim woman as a scholar and a jurist

***The texts, which call for seeking knowledge, are general; they address women as well as men. For example, the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) says***, "Seeking knowledge is incumbent upon every Muslim."

***This* hadîth *is an obligation that includes both men and women. All prominent religious scholars asserted the importance of carrying out this obligation. In the past, the Muslim woman had undertaken a noticeable effort in seeking religious knowledge, and she had managed to attain a lofty status that reached the limits of the sky.***

*The Muslim woman participates in congregational acts of worship*

***She can participate in Friday Prayers, Feast Prayers, Eclipse Prayers, Funeral Prayers, as well as in retirement inside mosques for worship, in Hajj and the like. This is clearly proven in the authentic hadîths of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him).***

*The Muslim woman participates in relief campaigns*

***She participates, for example, in attending to the wounded, nursing the sick, and ministering to the fighters in general. In our modern age, this could be called taking part in***

***relief campaigns. Moreover, they can also take part in the fighting defense troops if necessary.*** [1]

- ***Ar-Rubai' Bint Mu'awwidh (may Allah be pleased with her) narrated, "We used to participate in battles with the Prophet (peace be upon him), where we provided water for the fighters, attended to them and escorted the dead and the wounded to Madinah."***
- ***Umm 'Atiyyah (may Allah be pleased with her) narrated, "I participated in seven battles with the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him). I used to guard their camps, prepare food for them, heal the wounded and attend to the sick." (Recorded by Muslim).***
- ***'Â'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) narrated, "Sa'd was wounded on the Day of (the Battle of) the Trench. So the Prophet (peace be upon him) ordered that a tent be pitched for him inside the mosque so that he***

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[1] Some argue on the basis of women's participation in battles that free mixing is not sinful according to sharî'ah however, there is a great difference between a general principle and an exceptional case. General principles must be followed in all situations except when due to some temporary obstacle, it can be waived. However, as soon as that temporary obstruction is removed, one is obliged to follow the general principle. This is according to the Qur'anic verse, "Allah does not burdens not a person beyond his scope" (Al-Baqarah 286). Thus, in life and death situations like war some of the regulations regarding interaction between men and women, etc. may be lifted according to necessity. (See Role of Women in Muslim Society, Alfzular Rahman pg. 174)

***would be able to visit him more often."*** **(Agreed on by Al-Bukhâry and Muslim).**

- ***Al-Hâfiz bin Hajar, may Allah rest his soul, illustrated that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) ordered that Sa'd be treated in the tent of a woman called Rufaidah, who was a woman that used to attend to the wounded. And he said, "Make him rest in her tent so that I may be able to visit him more often as he will be near me."***

- ***Anas bin Mâlik (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated, "I saw 'Â'ishah bint Abû Bakr and Umm Sulaim rolling up their sleeves and I could see the bangles of their shanks. They were transferring water skins by carrying them on their backs. Then they provided water to the people, and returned, filled them again and then came again and gave water to the people."***

- ***Muslim recorded in his Sahîh that Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated that Umm Sulaim took a dagger with her on the day of (the battle of) Hunain. Abû Talhah saw her, so he said, "O Messenger of Allah! Umm Sulaim is carrying a dagger." She said, "I have taken it so that if any disbeliever comes near me, I will stab him in the belly!" The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) smiled.***

The Muslim woman takes part in enjoining goodness and forbidding evil

A Muslim woman can confront rulers and speak out the right truthful word regardless of whoever becomes angry. The texts, which enjoin this, are general; they address women as well as men. Allah, the Exalted, says:

﴿ وَٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَٱلْمُؤْمِنَٰتُ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَآءُ بَعْضٍ ۚ يَأْمُرُونَ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ ٱلْمُنكَرِ وَيُقِيمُونَ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَيُطِيعُونَ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥٓ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ سَيَرْحَمُهُمُ ٱللَّهُ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٧١﴾ ﴾ (التوبة : ٧١)

**The believers, men and women, are Auliyâ' (helpers, supporters, friends, protectors) of one another, they enjoin (on the people) Al-Ma'rûf (i.e. Islamic Monotheism and all that Islam orders one to do), and forbid (people) from Al-Munkar (i.e. polytheism and disbelief of all kinds, and all that Islam has forbidden); they perform *As-Salât (Iqâmat-as-Salât)* and give the *Zakât*, and obey Allah and His Messenger. Allah will have His Mercy on them. Surely Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise."**

- History will never forget the incident that occurred between Asmâ' bint Abû Bakr (may Allah be pleased with her) when Al-Hajjâj crucified her son 'Abdullâh bin Az-Zubair. She confronted him bravely regardless of his

brutality and haughtiness mentioning right in front of his face the prophecy of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) about the liar of Thaqîf and its corrupt destroyer. For she said, "Verily, the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said to us, 'There will appear a liar and a corrupt destroyer in Thaqîf.' As for the liar, we have already seen him and as for the corrupt destroyer, it is definitely you." He left her without saying a single word to her. Muslim mentioned this incident in his chapter on the 'Merits of the Companions' under the title of 'Mentioning the Liar of Thaqîf and its Corrupt Destroyer."

- There is also another incident where Asmâ' bint 'Umais argued with 'Umar when he said to her, "We have preceded you in immigration (to Madinah), so the Messenger of Allah is more closer to us than you." She got angry and said, "No, by Allah! You have been enjoying the company of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) who fed the hungry and preached to the ignorant amongst you, but we were in a very faraway land in Abyssinia only for the sake of Allah and His Messenger. I swear by Allah that I will neither eat nor drink except after informing the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) of what you have said." Then the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) stood at on her side and said, "None is closer to me than you. He (i.e. 'Umar) and his Companions have made only one immigration but you, the people of the ship, have made two." She added, "(After that incident,) Abû Mûsâ

and the people of the ship came to me in groups to ask me about this Hadîth. There was nothing in this world of more value to them or made them happier more than what the Prophet (peace be upon him) had said about them."

**The Muslim woman is the mistress of her household**

This is not a literary statement that is meant to impress people at assemblies and gatherings, but it is a part of an authentic Prophetic Hadîth. For the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ***"Everyone of the sons of Adam (i.e. mankind) has his master, a man is a master over his family and a woman is a mistress over her household." (Sahîh Al-Jâmi' As-Saghîr: 4/183)***

From the features, which illustrate her leadership over her household are the following:

Her right to choose her husband, as she cannot be married against her will. The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said, ***"No virgin is to be given in marriage until she is asked to give permission, and no woman is to be married again until she declares her consent." It was said to him, "But a virgin is usually shy." He said, "Her silence is her permission." (Agreed upon by Al-Bukhâry and Muslim).***

He (peace be upon him) also said, ***"A widow has more right to dispose of her affairs than her guardian, a virgin must be asked to give permission, and her permission is her silence." (Recorded by Muslim)*** An-Nawawy, may Allah be merciful to him, said in his interpretation of the above Hadîth:

"I believe that the phrase 'more right' implies that the widow as well as her guardian have a right to get her married. But she has more right to have herself married than her guardian has. For if he wants to get her married to a man who suits her and she refuses, she can not be forced. But if she wants to marry a man who suits her and her guardian refuses, he can be forced, because even if he insists on refusing, the judge can conclude the marriage. This asserts that her right is more than her guardian's right." (The interpretation of Sahîh Muslim by An-Nawawy: 9/204)

The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) also said,

***Ask for women's consent before you attempt to get them married." (Recorded by Ahmad and Anasâ'y, Sahîh Al-Jâmi' As-Saghîr: 300)***

If a man gives his daughter in marriage against her will, the marriage will be invalid. Al-Bukhâry included this verdict in his Sahîh under the title; "Chapter on the case when a man gives his daughter in marriage against her will, the marriage will be invalid." Under that title there is the Hadîth of Khansâ' bint Khudhâm Al-Ansâriyyah (may Allah be pleased with her). She had been previously married, and then her father gave her in marriage against her will. She complained to the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) and he nullified her marriage. (Recorded by Al-Bukhâry)

### Her right to divorce herself by *khul'a*

One of the features that prove her leadership over her household is that she has the right to be legally separated from her husband if she wills. Just as the man has the right to end his marriage by divorce, a woman also has the right to end her marriage by *khul'a* (divorce at the instance of the wife who must pay compensation). Ibn Rushd, may Allah rest his soul, says, "When the man was given the right to divorce his wife if he hated her. she was also given the right to end her marriage by *khul'a* if she hated him." Al-Hâfizh bin Hajar says, "If the breach happened from the part of the wife only, divorce by *khul'a* and paying compensation is permissible. This does not necessitate that the breach should be from both parties. Thus it is legally permissible for a wife if she hated living with her husband, to end her marriage even if he does not feel the same way."

### Her right to be treated honorably

Allah, the Exalted, says:

﴿ وَعَاشِرُوهُنَّ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ ۚ فَإِن كَرِهْتُمُوهُنَّ فَعَسَىٰٓ أَن تَكْرَهُوا۟ شَيْـًٔا وَيَجْعَلَ ٱللَّهُ فِيهِ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا ﴿١٩﴾ ﴾ (النساء: ١٩)

***"And live with them honorably. If you dislike them, it may be that you dislike a thing and Allah brings through it a great deal of good." (An-Nisâ', 4:19).***

'Honor' means that which is neither denied by the Islamic law nor by human values. For example, a man should pay his wife's due dowry and her sustenance. He should not frown at her for no reason and speak with her leniently. Moreover, he should not show love to any other woman beside her and try to have good manners as well as appearance as far as he can, just like he wants her to do. Allah, the Exalted and Ever-Majestic, says:

﴿ وَلَهُنَّ مِثْلُ ٱلَّذِى عَلَيْهِنَّ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ ﴾ (البقرة :٢٢٨)

**And they (women) have rights (over their husbands as regards living expenses, etc.) similar (to those of their husbands) over them (as regards obedience and respect, etc.) to what is reasonable."**

**(Al-Baqarah, 2: 228)**

## 85. What does the Qur'ân mention about women and their relation to men?

Women are equal to men and the obligatory commands in the Qur'ân as well as the *Sunnah* are directed to both of them. Allah says:

﴿ وَلَهُنَّ مِثْلُ الَّذِي عَلَيْهِنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوف ﴾ (البقرة : ٢٢٨)

**And they (women) have rights (over their husbands as regards living expenses, etc.) similar (to those of their**

**husbands) over them (as regards obedience and respect, etc.) to what is reasonable."**

**(Al-Baqarah, 2: 228)**

Women were one of the subjects of the commandment of the Prophet (peace be upon him); for he said, ***"I order you to treat women righteously."*** He (peace be upon him) also said, "***Honorable is he who treats (his wife) with honor, and mean is he who treats (his wife) with humiliation.***"

The woman in Islam is the daughter, the sister, the mother or the maternal or paternal aunt. Each one of these has her own inviolability and known rights more than words can ever express. Islam regards the woman as half of the community; and moreover, she gives birth to the other half, so she represents an entire nation!

## 86. Why does the Qur'ân consider women as belonging to the lowest level in society?

No one claims that except for some extremist orientalists or some ignorant people, for the Prophet of Islam (peace be upon him) said, "Women are equal to men." (Recorded by Abû Dâwûd). Abû Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said, "***Everyone of the sons of Adam (i.e. mankind) has his master; for a man is a master over his family and a woman is a mistress over her household." (Sahîh Al-Jâmi' As-Saghîr: 4/ 183)***

And the Qur'ân says:

﴿ وَلَهُنَّ مِثْلُ ٱلَّذِى عَلَيْهِنَّ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ ﴾ (البقرة :٢٢٨)

**And they (women) have rights (over their husbands as regards living expenses, etc.) similar (to those of their husbands) over them (as regards obedience and respect, etc.) to what is reasonable."**

**(Al-Baqarah, 2: 228)**

The Glorious Qur'ân stresses on the unity of the human origin for both men and women. For Allah, the Exalted, says:

﴿ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ ٱتَّقُوا۟ رَبَّكُمُ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَكُم مِّن نَّفْسٍ وَٰحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَآءً ۚ وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ ٱلَّذِى تَسَآءَلُونَ بِهِۦ وَٱلْأَرْحَامَ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا ۝١ ﴾ (النساء :١)

**O mankind! Be dutiful to your Lord, Who created you from a single person (Adam), and from him (Adam) He created his wife [Hawwâ' (Eve)], and from them both He created many men and women and fear Allah through Whom you demand your mutual (rights), and (do not cut the relations of) the wombs (kinship). Surely, Allah is Ever an All-Watcher over you."**

**(An-Nisâ', 4:1)**

The Qur'ân regards men and women as equal in responsibilities; for the Qur'ânic address is directed to both of them. Ibn Ruhsd, the renowned jurist, says, "Basically, both men and women are treated equally in terms of prescribed judgments unless there is a proof of distinction." Ibn Al-Qayyim says, "Religious scholars and jurists agreed that the Qur'ânic judgments which are written in the masculine form are directed to both men and women."

The Qur'ân decreed women's right to inherit after she herself was inherited as if she was property! Allah, the Exalted, says:

﴿ لِّلرِّجَالِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ ٱلْوَٰلِدَانِ وَٱلْأَقْرَبُونَ وَلِلنِّسَآءِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ ٱلْوَٰلِدَانِ وَٱلْأَقْرَبُونَ مِمَّا قَلَّ مِنْهُ أَوْ كَثُرَ نَصِيبًا مَّفْرُوضًا ﴾ (النساء :٧)

**There is a share for men and a share for women from what is left by parents and those nearest related, whether, the property be small or large - a legal share."**

**(An-Nisâ', 4:7)**

'Umar bin Al-Khattâb mentioned the following hadîth which was recorded by Al-Bukhâry in his Sahîh, "During the pre-Islamic era, we undervalued women. But after Islam came, we found that it (the Qur'ân) mentioned them, then we realized that they have rights upon us." In another narration he said, "By Allah! We had little regard for women during the pre-Islamic

era, until Allah revealed in their connection what He revealed and assigned for them what He assigned."

Islam states the woman's right to acquire proper upbringing and education; for the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said, "***If a man has a slave girl whom he brings her up righteously, educates her properly, then he emancipates and marries her, he will be granted a double reward.***" If this hadîth concerns slave girls, then definately free girls, sisters and all women have the right to acquire a proper education and upbringing. That is why the Muslim woman has taken part in narrating the *Sunnah* just like men. None of the scholars of hadîth has ever doubted the authenticity of a hadîth narrated by a woman just because its narrator is a woman. Women have acquired an eminent status in that field, and Al-Hâfizh Al-Thahaby says, "No woman was known for lying in narrating hadîths." He, may Allah rest his soul, adds, "I have never heard of a woman who was accused of being untrustworthy or whose narration was abandoned." (Mizân Al-I'tidâl: 4/604)

Al-Hâfizh bin 'Asâkir had more than eighty women who were among those who taught him! And the Imam Abû Muslim Al-Farâhidy, the hadîth scholar, recorded hadîths reported to him by seventy women. Moreover, there were women from this nation who were the shaikhs of people like Ash-Shâfi'y, Al-Bukhâry, Ibn Khalkân, Ibn Hayyân and many others. Ash-Shawkâny, may Allah rest his soul, says, "None amongst the scholars had ever doubted the authenticity of a hadîth reported by a woman just because its narrator was a woman. There are a

lot of hadîths in the *Sunnah* narrated by women from the Companions of the Prophet (peace be upon him), and that is a fact which anyone who has the least knowledge of the *Sunnah* can not deny."

**The Qur'ân has stated that the wife is a repose for her Husband.**

For Allah, the Exalted, says:

﴿ وَمِنْ ءَايَـٰتِهِۦٓ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُم مِّنْ أَنفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَٰجًا لِّتَسْكُنُوٓا۟ إِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُم مَّوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً ۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَـَٔايَـٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢١﴾ ﴾ (الروم : ٢١)

**And among His Signs is this, that He created for you wives from among yourselves, that you may find repose in them, and He has put between you affection and mercy. Verily, in that are indeed signs for a people who reflect."**

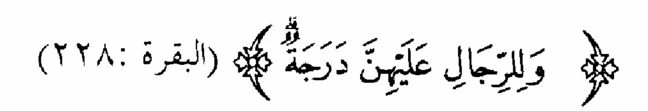
Islam has commanded that women should be treated justly and righteously; as the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: ***"I order you to treat women righteously." (Agreed upon by Al-Bukhâry and Muslim).*** Amongst the *hadîths* which Abû Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated from the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) was: ***"The one whose faith is most perfect amongst the believers is he who has the best manners, and the best amongst you are those who treat their women most righteously." (Recorded by At-Tirmidhy who regarded it as a good authentic Hadîth).*** He

(peace be upon him) also ordered that a husband should not find faults with his wife, as he said: ***A believing man (i.e. husband) should not hate a believing woman (i.e. his wife), if he hates a certain quality in her, he will find in her another quality that he likes." (Recorded by Muslim)*** He (peace be upon him) also explained saying ***"The worldly life is (just) a passing enjoyment, and the best of its pleasures is the pious woman." (Recorded by Muslim and narrated by 'Abdullâh bin 'Amr bin Al-'Âs).***

When many women came to the family of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) complaining about their husbands, the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said, ***"Verily! Many women have surrounded the family of Muhammad to complain about their husbands. Those husbands are not from the best amongst you." (Recorded by Abû Dâwûd with an authentic chain of transmission).*** Women were one of the main subjects of the commandment of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him), and it is enough to know that he stressed on this commandment until the last moment of his life.

## 87. Why are men superior to women in Islam?

This question surely refers to the degree of leadership that Allah mentions in these Verses:



**"...but men have a degree (of responsibility) over them" (Al-Baqarah, 2:228)**

﴿ ٱلرِّجَالُ قَوَّٰمُونَ عَلَى ٱلنِّسَآءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ ٱللَّهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ وَبِمَآ أَنفَقُوا۟ مِنْ أَمْوَٰلِهِمْ ﴾ (النساء : ٣٤)

**Men are the protectors and maintainers of women, because Allah has made one of them to excel the other, and because they spend (to support them) from their means." (An-Nisâ', 4:34)**

It is only a regulative superiority; which is necessary for the affairs of life to be conducted. And the law of human nature imposes that every gathering should have its head to regulate its affairs; for if not, people would be acting in chaos. If we imagine the house as an economic company or as an educational establishment, it must have someone as a leader so as to organize its affairs. There are four options; the first one is that both the man and the woman lead their house, but this will result in great chaos and corruption on account of the conflict that will happen between them both, as each one would be trying to impose his own will over the other's. The second option is that we disregard the matter of leadership completely, and so this will bring back chaos, which any reasonable person will not accept. The third option is that the woman would have the upper hand, but this matter is something that nature as well as logic rejects, and the woman herself rejects. This leaves no other option but that the man would have the upper hand. Being more

aware of what is beneficial and more capable of carrying out whatever is best because of his power and money, it is the man's duty to protect the woman and provide for her. This is what is clearly stated in the above Qur'ânic Verse.

A woman willingly accepts to have a boss at work, so why should she not accept the same at home claiming that this will hurt her ego and her humanity? The ship of life must have a master or else it will sink and drown all who are on board. The Qur'ânic wording is very concise, the Verse does not say 'Men are masters over women' but it says, "Men are the protectors and maintainers of women." This makes the woman's protection and sustenance incumbent upon the man.

Real fear is not about the principle of leadership, for no one can be against it except fools or narrow-minded people, but what is unacceptable is injustice, harshness and maltreatment. These are prohibited forms of behavior that do not relate to the concept of leadership in itself. Injustice is an act that incurs grave torment on the Day of Resurrection, and abusing one's spouse is something that is done by those who are mean and ignoble. The best people are those who treat their women most honorably and righteously, and Allah hates every harsh braggart. The Prophet (peace be upon him) was sent to make complete the best of manners. Moreover, he who enjoys the best of manners shall have whatever is best in this world as well as the Hereafter, and he shall attain a lofty rank as if he has observed fast and performed the supererogatory night Prayers. All these rewards have been stated in the two sources of Islamic knowledge: : the

Qur'ân and the *Sunnah*. The Prophet (peace be upon him) continued to command his nation to treat women in accordance with the norms of virtue and righteousness until the last moments of his life. If some husbands commits a sin by maltreating their wives, they will be accounted for it in this world as well as in the Hereafter where they shall be requited for the worst of what they used to do. Islam gives the woman the right to end that kind of life if her husband maltreats her and does not listen to any advice. But all this is of no relation to the concept of leadership without which marital life cannot exist.

People accept the leadership of rulers, but they refuse their injustice and tyranny, and Islamic law asserts people's right to reject and confront those corrupt rulers and their tyranny if necessary. But no one has ever said that government should be eliminated or that the governing authority should be abolished because of the deviation of some of them . This is not reasonable in any law or logic!

## 88. Why are women oppressed in Islamic countries?

We have to agree first on the meaning of oppression and its standards before we discuss the answer to that question. For I do not approve of the generalization in the question. We have to distinguish between three matters:

The first is that oppression is the deprivation of executing rights. But in fact what is regarded as a right in some cultures may not be regarded in the same way in other cultures.

For instance, the western world regards the freedom of taking boy or girl friends and indulging in vice as a right, and forbidding this as an act of oppression! It also sees having alcoholic drinks as a right and forbidding it as an act of oppression! The Western world thinks pornography, which glorifies vice and promotes sin in societies through picturing the sexual relation between men and women in its basest forms and broadcasting it publicly to people, as being some kind of art and culture! So this community surely thinks that banning it is a great form off oppression! Islam and all other Divine religions strongly prohibit that and all that leads to it. Thus, we have to agree first on a definition of oppression and also define some practical standards for it before we answer the above question.

The second matter we should agree on is the fact that not exercising some of a person's rights does not necessarily mean he is being oppressed. For may be that person does not want to exercise these rights because of the existence of other priorities that he thinks are more important and more worthy of his attention. For example, women have the right to work if they want to, but many women do not exercise that right and see that staying at home to bring up their children properly is more important. A second example is the right to vote , which all citizens have, but not all of them actually go to vote for one reason or another. A third example is the right of prosecution, which is granted to all people, but many prefer to give up some of their rights in return for preventing the trouble of litigation and going back and forth to lawyers. A fourth example is that of

free education, which is a right for all citizens, but many give up that right and resort to private schools or private education at home because of the bad environment in public schools, and so on.

Thus, we have to distinguish between rights and duties. It often happens that practicing what is agreed as being a right differs from one society to another, depending upon the variation between cultures, environments, traditions and accepted values.

The third point that should be agreed upon is that no society is free from deviations and that values are established on the basis of what is normal not what is exceptional. Thus, if there are some instances of oppression in some environments, it is falsehood, which Allah and His Messenger forbid, and which righteous servants of Allah deny wherever it is and they by no means legalize it. But if we compare the oppression that is attributed to the Islamic environment to that which occurs outside it, we will find that it is much less than the oppression practiced by other nations. In spite of what every Muslim thinks, a little oppression is unlawful just like a lot of oppression!

Lastly, we have never seen such oppression on women as that which is practiced in irreligious societies. In such societies, a woman's body has been converted to a means to promote goods and products. Moreover, she has been made to resort to the most difficult and harsh kinds of jobs when her society declared that it is not responsible for her sustenance. This forced

her to toil so as to get her livelihood. There are many victims who had no choice other than to live in homes or who were forced to run away and hide from their husbands because of the hellish life they were living in, suffering from the harshness and tyranny of their husbands.

## 89. If men and women are really equal, why are women prevented from driving cars in Saudi Arabia?

This is an independent opinion from the part of some religious scholars there, who considered the benefits and harms of this matter as well as the specific conditions of their society. Independent opinions, which rely only on taking into consideration the harms and benefits of something, often alter by the changes of time, place and conditions. What is well known is that religious scholars in the Islamic nation are not in consensus about that specific matter. We find women driving cars in all other Islamic nations and none of the religious scholars there have rejected this.

## 90. Do women have the right to rule in Islamic countries?

Apart from ruling the state, the matter is open to the independent opinion of jurisprudence, as there is no evidence, either in the Qur'ân or in the *Sunnah*, which prohibit this. Those who follow the Hanafi school of thought say that the woman can judge in the cases where her testimony is accepted; that is to

say in the cases other than that which incur prescribed penalties and retaliation. But At-Tabary and Ibn Hazm say that she can judge in all cases basing their opinion on the permissibilty for a woman to give *Fatwâ* (legal opinion). And they said that the Hadîth, which said, "***Those who have appointed a woman as their ruler will not be successful***" refers to the grand government of a nation. However all jurists unanimously agree on the permissibilty for a woman to be an agent for any group of people and to manage their property and projects. They also agree on the permissibilty that she can be a guardian on children and the incapacitated. Thus if there are distinguished women who are more qualified than men, the door is wide open for them to lead in many fields of life.

## 91. Why are women forbidden to vote in many Islamic countries?

What a strange generalization! Women practice that right in almost all Islamic societies and this fact is broadcasted over televisions. From where did this allegation arise?

## 92. Why are women forbidden to participate in the political arena?

Reality proves the falsity of this claim, and the behaviors of the minority should not be taken against the majority. Regardless of the different opinions of jurists concerning this issue, the most prominent features of the political field are the

right of voting and the right to be elected in parliaments and councils.

- As for voting, it refers to a kind of deputation in practicing political rights. Through it, a nation appoints a deputy to carry out such duties. There is nothing in Islamic law that prevents women from deputing a certain person to defend her rights and express her will in the parliament or in any of the states' established councils. But what is prohibited is the evils that might occur as a result of practicing that right; such as indecency in talk or appearance, illegal privacy and the like.
- The second aspect of being part of the world of politics is exercising the right to be a candidate for parliaments and councils. There are two jobs expected from the members of such councils: the first is to use diligence in legislating laws and regulations; thus this is the core of enjoining goodness and forbidding evil. There is no rule in Islamic law that forbids women from doing that, is if she possesses the qualifications to perform such a job and can avoid the aforementioned evils.

We assert that there is nothing that prohibits women from participating in all such activities. But her own benefit is the judge whether to exercise these rights or not. For a woman may see that it is better for her not to be involved in such an intense atmosphere, especially with the absence of Islamic rules that regulate practicing such work. In this case it becomes an

atmosphere full of conspiracies, intrigues and political schemes. A woman's reputation may be negatively affected in such an atmosphere and her private life may be exposed because of political disputes and intrigues.

Preventing a group of people from working in the political field is a matter which is never considered as humiliating or inhuman; for there are several regulations in some modern systems which prevent judges and men from the armed forces to work in the political arena. This aims at keeping them away from its hidden conspiracies and at preserving their loyalty to their nation as a whole, not to this or that party. This is because of the national mission they are performing which requires loyalty to the whole nation.

## 93. Why does the Qur'ân permit men to beat their wives?

I think this question means to refer to the Verse in which Allah, the Exalted, says:

﴿ وَٱلَّٰتِي تَخَافُونَ نُشُوزَهُنَّ فَعِظُوهُنَّ وَٱهْجُرُوهُنَّ فِي ٱلْمَضَاجِعِ وَٱضْرِبُوهُنَّ فَإِنْ أَطَعْنَكُمْ فَلَا تَبْغُوا۟ عَلَيْهِنَّ سَبِيلًا ﴾ (النساء: ٣٤)

**As to those women on whose part you see ill conduct, admonish them (first), (next), refuse to share their beds, (and last) beat them (lightly, if it is useful), but if**

**they return to obedience, seek not against them means (of annoyance).”**

Let us start first with what is meant by this honorable Verse before we answer the question. This Verse refers to the case of ill conduct on the part of a wife toward her husband. So let us ask, what is this ill conduct? And what is its treatment?

Ibn Jarîr At-Tabary, the most prominent religious interpreter, says, “As for the word ‘ill-conduct’, it refers to the women who treat their husbands with haughtiness, abstaining from giving their husbands their rights, and disobeying them in what they should obey them in, out of hatred.” At-Tabary reported that meaning from Ibn ‘Abbâs, Ibn Zaid, As-Saddy, ‘Atâ’ and many other imams.

As regards the treatment that the above glorious Verse states, it is as follows respectively: admonition, then refusing to share their beds, and then beating lightly as a final solution. Allah, the Exalted, says what means, “Admonish them.” This means remind them of Allah and make them understand that it is a sin to disobey their husbands.

Allah then says what means, “Refuse to share their beds.”. The interpretations of the above Qur’ânic statement differ, some explain that it means a husband is to abstain from having sexual intercourse with his wife but still sleep with her in the same bed. And some say that he should abstain from talking to her about refusing to have sexual intercourse with him, and others say that it means refusing to sleep within the same bed

with her completely as long as she is in that state of ill conduct. But all interpreters agree that this abandoning should take place within the house, as it is not lawful for a husband to leave it completely, for the Prophet (peace be upon him) says: ***No abandoning should happen except within the house."***

The last solution in the above Verse is what means, "(And last) beat them (lightly, if it is useful)". All interpreters say that beating should be very light, giving an illustration that it may be done by a Siwâk (tooth stick).

This is the interpretation of the Verse, and from it we conclude the following:

- We are here discussing a case of ill-conduct, when a woman abstains from obeying her husband out of haughtiness and stubbornness, but he is not asking her to commit a sin; for there is no obedience for a human being in a matter, which involves disobedience to the Creator. And he is not requesting what she is unable to give, for asking what is not within the capacity of a person is unlawful. If Allah does not burden His servants with what is beyond their limits, what about His servants when they request for something from each other? The matter is not as some ignorant people think; the picture is not that of a skinny, decent, delicate woman who is abused by a powerful, harsh man who is out for blood! This picture definitely does not exist within the boundaries of what is

lawful in Islamic law. It only exists in the imagination of those who tell lies about it.

- In this Verse, we confront a gradual method of treatment that starts with admonishing and ends with a light beating, which is illustrated by using a Siwâk (a tooth stick) and the like.

- From the *hadîths* recorded by Muslim and narrated by 'Â'ishah, the mother of the believers (may Allah be pleased with her), is that she said, "The Prophet (peace be upon him) had never beaten a woman with his hand, or a servant, or anyone except in fighting for the Cause of Allah." Allah chose the best and most complete manners for his Prophet (peace be upon him).

In a Hadîth recorded in Sahîh Al-Bukhâry, 'Abdullâh bin Zam'ah (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ***How can anyone of you beat his wife as if she was a camel or a slave? And how (after this) can he hug her (or he said) have intercourse with her at the end of the same day?"*** The Prophet (peace be upon him) was wondering about those who do this and at the same time he is warning against it. For how can a man beat his wife, as if he was a wolf and she is the sheep in his hands, and at the end of the same day beg her like a slave to be near her and have intercourse with her? And is it appropriate for him to humiliate and beat his wife, who is like his own self, with his whip or hands as if she was his slave? Ibn Al-Jawzy, may Allah rest his soul, said, "Man

should know that what is not accomplished by talking and threatening will not be accomplished by a whip either. On the contrary, leniency may be more effective than beating, for beating makes the refusing person more stubborn. Furthermore, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ***Will not any of you be ashamed to beat his wife as if she was a slave and then have intercourse with her shortly afterwards?" (Ahkâm An-Nisâ': 82)*** The Prophet (peace be upon him) also said: ***Seventy women have surrounded the family of Muhammad to complain about their husbands. Those husbands are not from the best among you." (Sahîh Al-Jâmi' As-Saghîr: 5/30)*** And He (peace be upon him) also said: ***"The worst amongst you are those who beat (their wives)."***

Finally, we conclude that a light beating is a possible means of treatment, it works in some levels of society and with some people. It is like a sour medicine, so a good and righteous man should not use it. One of the aspects of the comprehensiveness of Islamic law, which has come to direct all levels of society at all times and places, is that it puts forward this solution within a frame of strict rules, so that it would not be converted into a whip of torment in the hands of every stout man with which he can punish his woman whenever he likes!

## 94. Why do women have to pray behind men?

This is the tradition of the Prophet (peace be upon him). In Sahîh Al Bukhâry there is this title, "The Prayer of women behind men." In this chapter, there is a Hadîth narrated by Umm

Salamah in which she related that men used to stay after the final salutations of prayers until the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) would leave while women used to leave the mosque immediately after performing the prescribed prayers.

Thus if the rows of women were in front of all or some of the rows of men and the women wanted to leave, they would overstep them and this is unlawful.

Another reason behind this may be that in this way, men would be more able to concentrate and submit to Allah in their prayers, and that they would not be thinking of women while standing in front of Allah, the Exalted and Ever-Majestic. Prayer takes only a few moments, and a person needs to avoid all distractions that make him think of anything other than Allah!

## 95. Why do women have to walk behind their husbands in the street?

This is not true! I have never heard of anything in the Islamic law that obliges this nor have I seen any incident like that among Muslims. If this happens in some communities, it is because it is a part of their traditions, but it has nothing to do with the laws and teachings of Islam. For the Islamic law is derived from what has been revealed in the Qur'ân and the authentic *hadîths* of the *Sunnah* in addition to that which is deduced from them through applying the known rules of *ijtihâd* (personal reasoning) by the scholars of religion. What is other than that are just human ideas or cultural traditions, which

people may or may not accept, and whoever abandons such practices has no blame on him. At the same time, whoever applies it may not attribute it to the Islamic law or claim that it is from among its regulations, or else he would be attributing to Allah, what He has not revealed without possessing enough knowledge, and this is one of the greatest sins.

## 96. Why are women forbidden to attend congregational prayers?

Women are not forbidden from attending congregational prayers, and whoever claims this is ignorant of both the laws of Islam as well as the history of its Prophet (peace be upon him). It was customary for women to attend congregational prayers and all the gatherings of goodness and knowledge with the Prophet (peace be upon him). ʻÂ'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) narrated, ***"Believing women used to attend the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer with the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) wrapped in their garments, then go back to their houses unrecognized because of the darkness in the early morning." (Agreed upon by Al-Bukhâry and Muslim)***. The Prophet (peace be upon him) used to wait in the mosque for a while after finishing the prayer so that women could leave before the men. At the incident of changing the Qiblah (the direction faced in prayer), there is this narration, ***"... thus men replaced women and women replaced men and performed the remaining to rak'ahs (units of prayer) while facing the Sacred Mosque." (Fath Al-Bâry: 2/52)***. This indicates that women usually

attended congregational prayers with the Prophet (peace be upon him). When the believing women increased in number, the Prophet (peace be upon him) made a door especially for them so as not to feel uncomfortable for being crowded with men in their entrance and their exit. Nâfi', the freed slave of Ibn 'Umar, reported, "Ibn 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: ***We should leave this door for women." Nâfi' added, "Ibn 'Umar never entered from that door until he died." (Recorded by Abû Dâwûd).***

Furthermore, the Prophet (peace be upon him) commanded that women should go to the two Feast Prayers, even those who are having their menstrual periods, they should go to attend these gatherings of goodness and listen to the supplications of the Muslims, but the menstruating women should not enter the place of prayer. Muslim recorded in his Sahîh the following hadîth, which is narrated by Umm 'Atiyyah (may Allah be pleased with her). She narrated saying, ***"The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) ordered all of us to go out in the Day of Breaking the Fast and the Day of Sacrifice: the adult unmarried girls, the married women and even the menstruating women. But the last group should not perform the Prayer, they should only attend these gatherings of goodness and listen to the earnest supplications said by the Muslims (like those of invoking Allah for rain etc.). I said, 'O Messenger of Allah! But not all of us has a suitable garment***

***to wear.' He replied, 'They should borrow garments from their sisters (in Islam) who have." (Recorded by Muslim)***

Within the same Chapter, there are several authentic hadîths, which prohibit men from forbidding their wives to attend gatherings of knowledge and congregational prayers whenever they want. The title of this Chapter is, "Chapter on the going of women to mosques if they are decently dressed and not applying perfume." Under this title, there are a number of *hadîths* such as the following:

- Sâlim reported on the authority of his father that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said, ***"If the wife of anyone of you asks permission to go to the mosque, he should not forbid her."***
- Ibn 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said, ***"Do not prevent the maidens of Allah from going to the mosques of Allah."*** In another narration, the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said, ***"When your women ask your permission to go to mosques, permit them."***
- Ibn 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) also narrated, "The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said, ***'Do not prevent women from going out to the mosques at night.'"*** In another narration, the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: ***"Permit women to go to the mosques at night."***

At the same time, a women's going to mosques is conditioned on her adhering to virtue and decency in appearance by observing the prescribed veil and abstaining from applying perfume and the like. 'Amrah bint 'Abdur-Rahmân reported:

***I heard 'Â'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her), the wife of the Prophet (peace be upon him) saying, "If the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) were to see what has women innovated, he would not have let them go to mosques. He would have prevented them just like the women of the children of Israel were prevented." I asked, "Were the women of the children of Israel really prevented from going to mosque?" She replied, " Yes."***

The phrase 'What has women innovated' refers to ornaments, perfumes, and attractive clothes.

Thus, it is definately legal for women to attend congregational prayers, and we have never heard of a rule in Islam that prevents them from this. However, Allah, the Exalted, has lightened this matter for them, as He did not make it obligatory on them. Therefore, it is their right not their duty, and there is a great difference between the two.

## 97. Is it permissible for a woman to meet men without the company of her husband?

It is permissible on three conditions: Firstly, there should be a certain benefit from it; secondly, there should not be an illegal privacy; and lastly the husband should know and have

agree to it. It is known that all husbands permit their wives to attend regular daily activities like going to work, attending meetings, and speaking with colleagues and supervisors in an acceptable manner etc. But what is impermissible for a woman in this respect is taking boyfriends, having secret meetings with men, and being alone with them.

## 98. What is the opinion of Islam concerning abortion?

A fetus in Islam is regarded as highly inviolable. There are jurists who say that it is unlawful to abort an embryo even from the first moment of conception. Others say that it is lawful to abort the embryo during the first forty days of conception if there is an extreme necessity for it. But jurists declare it unlawful after that period, except in the case where the mother's life is in danger and so the mother's life is favored. They have unanimously agreed that when the soul is breathed into it, it is unlawful to harm the fetus, even if medical tests prove that it is gravely deformed, except if the mother's death is inevitable. Islamic law has legislated a severe punishment for whoever kills a fetus without the above reason.

Perhaps it is appropriate here to mention the decision made by the council of jurisprudence issued on the occasion of discussing whether it is legal to abort a deformed fetus. The council was held in 1990 and its decision was as follows:

It is unlawful to abort a one hundred –and-twenty-day-old fetus, even if there is a medical diagnoses that it is deformed, unless a committee of doctors asserts that completing the pregnancy is a sure danger on the mother's life. In this case, abortion is permissible whether the fetus is deformed or not, so as to avoid the worst of the two harms. Before the passage of one hundred and twenty days of pregnancy, if a committee of specialized doctors asserts that the fetus is deformed with an incurable deformity and that if it is born in its time it will be in a bad condition, which will be painful for him as well as for his family, basing their decision on technical examinations and laboratory tests, it is permissible to abort the fetus in this case upon the request of its parents.

After the council declared its decision, it reminded the doctors and the parents to fear Allah and thoroughly examine the situation.

## 99. Why is it unlawful for a Muslim woman to marry a non-Muslim?

Allah, the Exalted, prohibits the marriage of a Muslim woman to a non-Muslim man. All the religious scholars and all Muslims voice this unanimously. Allah, the Exalted, says:

﴿ وَلَا تَنكِحُوا۟ ٱلْمُشْرِكَـٰتِ حَتَّىٰ يُؤْمِنَّ ۚ وَلَأَمَةٌ مُّؤْمِنَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِّن مُّشْرِكَةٍ وَلَوْ أَعْجَبَتْكُمْ ﴾ (البقرة : ٢٢١)

**And do not marry *Al-Mushrikât* (idolatresses, etc.) till they believe (worship Allah Alone). And indeed a slave woman who believes is better than a (free) *Mushrikah* (idolatress, etc.), even though she pleases you.**

**(Al-Baqarah, 2: 221)**

Allah also says:

﴿ فَإِنْ عَلِمْتُمُوهُنَّ مُؤْمِنَٰتٍ فَلَا تَرْجِعُوهُنَّ إِلَى ٱلْكُفَّارِ لَا هُنَّ حِلٌّ لَّهُمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحِلُّونَ لَهُنَّ ﴾ (الممتحنة : ١٠)

**...then if you know them for true believers, send them not back to the disbelievers, they are not lawful (wives) for the disbelievers nor are the disbelievers lawful (husbands) for them. (Al-Mumtahanah, 60: 10)**

There is great wisdom behind this. Part of the reason for this is that perhaps a believing woman would face some affliction in her faith when she is married to a man who does not believe in her religion or her Prophet or in the truthfulness of the Book. He may belittle her, mock her and wrong her Prophet, and under these circumstances she would not be able to stand living with him. Furthermore, she will not like the unlawful matters he may practice; like for example, usury, adultery, drinking alcohol, eating pork and so on.

When the situation is reversed, i.e. when a Muslim man marries a Christian or a Jewish woman, the aforementioned obstacles disappear. For he believes in, respects and loves her

Prophet for the sake of Allah, just like he believes in, respects and loves his Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) for the sake of Allah. Scholars of Islamic law agree that disbelieving in one of the Prophets of Allah is equivalent to disbelieving in all of His Prophets, and that abusing one of them means abusing them all. These are aspects of blasphemy which cannot co-exist with true faith. Thus, abusing Jesus (peace be upon him) , for example, or any of the Prophets is like abusing our Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). This is considered disbelieving in Allah, His Messengers and apostasy from the religion. A Muslim believes that the Torah and the Gospel were originally revelations from Allah, even if human beings tampered with them afterwards. Allah says:

﴿ اللَّهُ لَا إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ ۝ نَزَّلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَأَنزَلَ التَّوْرَاةَ وَالْإِنجِيلَ ۝ مِن قَبْلُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ ﴾ (آل عمران : ٢-٤)

**"*Allah! Lâ ilahâ illa Huwa* (none has the right to be worshipped but Allah), the Ever Living, the One Who sustains and protects all that exists. It is He Who has sent down the Book (the Qur'ân) to you (Muhammad) with truth, confirming what came before it. And he sent down the Taurât (Torah) and the Injeel (Gospel). Aforetime, as a guidance to mankind..."**

**(Âl-'Imrân, 3: 2-4)**

## 100. Why is it unlawful for a Muslim woman to marry more than one man at the same time?

Polyandry[1] is not only forbidden by Islamic law, but it is illogical and rejected even by human nature! It is permitted neither by religion, nor by any secular law. The rationale behind its prohibition is mainly to avoid confusion of lineage that would occur as a result of this abnormal situation.

Women, by nature, cannot conceive more than once a year. Men, however, are capable of begetting many children from many women at the same time.

From another aspect, all laws, whether secular or religious, agree that the man is the leader of the family. Thus, if we were to permit polyandry, who would become the head of the household? Would all of the men compete in sharing the leadership? Or would she choose one of them to be the leader, to the disagreement of the rest?

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[1] Polyandry : Polygamy in which a woman has more than one husband

## 101. Why does Islam legalize polygyny?

How many attacks have been launched against Islam on account of the issue of polygyny[1], in spite of the fact that it is to be counted as one of the advantages of Islam.

Women have the right to be chaste within the framework of a legitimate, pure relationship. Let us suppose, however, that women outnumber men, which is the reality in many areas especially in the wake of wars and other such disasters. In such a situation, if we say that every man should have only one wife, what are the options for those remaining women? There are only three alternatives:

1. Resorting to illegitimate relations to satisfy one's physical needs. 2. Dying from despair and grief
2. Polygyny under the legitimate relationship of marriage, with a husband rather than a temporary lover.

The option of polygyny allows for a stable marital life, the fruit of which are children who are brought up and enjoy warm relations within an honorable, united family. Now the question is, what is the choice for the reasonable?

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[1] Although the word polygamy is frequently used when discussing the man's right to marry more than one wife in Islam, it is incorrect as it means having more than one wife or husband at the same time. Polygyny is the more specific term, which means to have more than one wife at a time.

On the other hand, the biological clock of man during which he is capable of fertilization is about double the biological clock of woman. Were we to declare polygyny to be unlawful, this would lead to a great loss that could be estimated by around half of the male humans. This would be the case when women reach their menopause. This concept has been realized by some of western philosophers where one of them said, "If we left a man to marry a hundred woman for a year, this might lead to giving birth to one hundred child in a year. Whereas, had we left a hundred men to marry a single woman, she will probably give birth to one child. It is most likely to beget no children because the tilth of every man would be spoiled by the other.

Moreover, in some cases the woman might be barren or she might be afflicted with a physical or psychological illness that prevent her from meeting her martial duties. Which is the best choice: divorce her or maintain the marriage under the sustenance of the husband while permitting him to have another wife?

Polygyny is not a practice innovated by Islam. Since the dawn of history, humanity has been well-acquainted with polygyny. It was well- known to the Children of Israel.

The countries that prohibited polygyny and whose legislation is theoretically based upon the concept of monogamy are swept over by this dangerous trichotomy: prostitution, illegitimate children, and spinsters! Apparently and theoretically these countries are forbidding polygyny though they actually

practice it through adultery and prostitution. One of the orientalists has said, "Polygyny is widespread worldwide, it will remain as such so long as we exist! No matter how much polygyny is stressed to be prohibited by legislation, the main issue is to decide whether it is better to legalize it and put a limit for it or to remain in practice under the aegis of veiled hypocrisy! Is it better to put no limits or restrictions on polygyny! There remains the question: which sounds good: to have numerous wives or to have numerous mistresses?!

## 102. Why aren't men and women allowed to choose their spouses?

I don't think there is any debate regarding a man's right to choose his wife for it is almost unheard of that a man should be forced to marry someone whom he doesn't love. However, there are no laws, whether Islamic or man-made which protect a man from being forced to marry in the few, very rare cases where it may happen within tribal societies due to tribal considerations.

As for the woman's right to choose her husband, it is a matter stipulated by Islamic legislation and emphasized by the Qur'ân and *Sunnah*. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, ***"No virgin is to be given in marriage until she is asked to give her permission, and no woman is to be married again until she declares her consent." It was said to him, "But a virgin is usually shy." He answered, "Her silence is her permission." (Agreed upon by Al-Bukhâry and Muslim).*** The Prophet also

said, ***"The widow has more right to dispose of her affairs than her guardian, and a virgin must be asked to give her permission, and her permission is her silence" (Reported by Muslim).***

The marriage of a woman who has been forced to marry against her will is invalid. Al-Bukhâry entitled a chapter in his collection of authentic *hadîths* "If a man gives his daughter in marriage against her will then such a marriage is invalid." In this chapter he mentioned the *hadîth* of Khansâ' bint Khidâm Al-Ansâriyyah (may Allah be pleased with her) who, though she had been previously married [and subsequently widowed], her father married her to someone against her will. When she went to the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him)[to ask about her situation], he declared her marriage to be annulled (recorded by Al-Bukhâry).

## 103. Why does the husband have the right to divorce his wife while the wife is deprived from such a right?

To begin with, a Muslim woman does, in fact, have the right to end her marriage by *khul'a* if she cannot stand to live with her husband or by asking for divorce if she is being mistreated or abused. Marriage in Islam is not an eternal prison from which a woman can never escape, nor is it a bond from which she can never be untied.

However, rationally speaking, it is agreed that men are generally more sensible and less emotional than women. Thus

the man is better able to weigh the situation logically, considering the detrimental consequences that would result from destroying the existing family life. Furthermore, the burden of working to afford the prerequisites of marriage is placed solely on the man. He is also required to bear the financial responsibilities for the woman even during the period of *'iddah*[1], (which could extend up to nine months in the case of pregnancy). The woman, on the other hand, is not responsible for any of the consequences of the divorce, nor is she required to bear any financial obligations during the marriage. Thus, the first party to be affected by the divorce is the husband. For this reason, it is most suitable that the right to pronounce divorce is given to the husband, although the wife still has the right to ask for *khul'a* if she dislikes her husband, or to request divorce if she is being harmed or abused.

## 104. Why do Muslim women veil themselves and why are men not ordered to do the same?

First of all the Islamic injunction ordering women to veil themselves, is not a new innovation with respect to previous divine legislations that were revealed to man. There has never been any divinely revealed religion, which has prescribed that the entire body should be covered. Rather, previous divine legislations state that it is the woman's body that should be

[1] *'Iddah*: The waiting period after divorce or death of husband during which the woman is prohibited from remarrying

entirely covered although they might have differed in some of the details. Even today, pictures of the Virgin Mary, and the habit worn by Christian nuns attest to this fact.

Secondly, the wisdom behind this ruling may be due to the fact that men were created with a natural disposition which makes them suited to bear the difficulties of protecting and providing for their families and traveling throughout the world. Thus, it is more suitable that he be only obliged to wear that which covers his private parts (from the naval to the knees). What is beyond that is left to his discretion according to what suits his situation. Women, on the other hand, were created with a delicate and gentle nature, which is attractive to men as it is they who generally are pursued. Thus, it is more appropriate that the woman should be required to protect herself and her modesty so that this beauty that leads others to long for her is preserved. In this way, the similitude of a veiled woman is like that of a rare, well-guarded gem.

## 105. Why aren't women allowed to shake hands with men and vice versa?

The issue is not absolute in all cases. Rather, there are some exceptions that should be taken into consideration.

1. This injunction is not enforced with regard to one's wife and *mahrims* (unmarriageable kin): i.e. the mothers, grandmothers, daughters, granddaughters, sisters, maternal

and paternal aunts, nieces, mothers-in-law, stepdaughters, daughters-in-law, and stepmothers.

2. Those who are related by suckling are also excluded from the aforementioned ruling because the suckling-relationship prohibits marriage to the same extent as the blood relationship.[1]

3. According to some scholars, elderly women who no longer desire men, and are no longer desired by men are also exempted.

After excluding the aforementioned cases, it remains that only marriageable women are bound by this ruling. The religious scholars have unanimously agreed that this ruling is not based on any philosophy which degrades women regarding her as something defiled, or for any other reason belittles her or her humanity.

This ruling is neither related to the common notion of the ancient Greeks, that woman is an abomination of Satan, nor to the saying of Socrates that women are most likened to a poisonous tree that looks beautiful, however, the sparrows that eat from it immediately die. Likewise, it is unrelated to the Roman belief that women are like shackles or a yoke that can never be removed.

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[1] Thus, if a boy was nursed by a woman, she would become his foster mother, her daughters would be his foster sisters, her mother would be his foster grandmother, her sisters would be his foster aunts; all of whom are prohibited for him to marry.

The notion in Islam is also different from that of the Chinese, who in ancient times likened women to torrential waters that wash away happiness and wealth. Men were not only allowed to sell their wives as slaves, but they were even allowed to bury them alive! According to the Hindus, there is no affliction, tempest, death, hell, poison, snake, or fire worse than women! For the Hindu woman, her husband was thought to be a representative of a deity on Earth. If her husband died, she would remain in mourning for the rest of her lifetime. Anything she touches is considered defiled! Thus, it is better for her to throw herself on her husband's funeral pyre to be burned to death with him!

Similarly, the Islamic ruling has no basis in the Christian belief, which regards woman as the origin of vice in the world, as it was she who tempted Adam to eat from the prohibited tree. Neither is it related to the theological questions that were widespread throughout the fifth century about the nature of woman; whether she is merely a body or comprised of both a body and a soul. (To which they concluded that woman is formed of a mere body with no soul; with the exception of the Virgin Mary, the mother of Jesus (Peace be upon him)! Likewise, in 586 CE, the French held a conference to determine whether women are actually human beings, and whether they had a soul or not! Finally, they did her a favor by declaring that she was in fact a human being, but that she is created for nothing other than to serve men! Even during the era of King Henry VIII, the English Parliament issued a decree, forbidding

women to read the New Testament because they were considered to be impure!

In the pre-Islamic era, women were humiliated and regarded as inferior to men. Not only were they denied the right to inherit, even worse, giving birth to a girl was considered an ill omen. For this reason they would hasten to bury their daughters alive. Islam, however, came to put an end to these atrocities against women. Islam regards these and similar philosophies to be pure ignorance, for which there is no place in the Muslim mentality. Rather, Muslims are directed to follow the guidance of the Prophet (peace be upon him) who refuted such thinking and urged men to treat women well. In his speech during the Farwell Hajj as he stood on top of Mount Arafat he (peace be upon him) ordered men to treat women well. .

Islamic Jurists have agreed upon the fact that prohibiting men and women from shaking hands with one another has nothing to do with such practices of the pre-Islamic era or the inferior place of women in society. Rather, the purpose of the prohibition is to block the way that may lead to committing sins because of the natural attraction between men and women. This is the way by which Islam safeguards women and protects her honor in the Muslim society, so that she is like a precious, protected pearl.

Shaking hands between men and women who are not *mahrams*, the scholars' opinions are divided into two groups:

- According to the first group, shaking hands between men and women who are not related by blood, nursing, or marriage, is prohibited. These scholars cite some *hadîths* asserting that the Prophet (peace be upon him) never touched the hand of a marriageable woman. Also, some of the *hadîths* have strongly threatened those who touch a marriageable woman. Those who support this opinion justify the prohibition by saying that shaking hands might lead to temptation, whether on the part of the man, the woman or both of them. Prohibiting such an act is meant to block the way that may lead to committing sins and to save both sides from the insinuations of devil that might happen while shaking hands in addition to avoiding caressing and longing that might also take place.
- According to the second group of scholars, the prohibited handshaking is that which seeks to gratify one's lust. They justify their opinion by saying that the Prophet (peace be upon him) did not shake the hands of a non-Mahram woman as an act of piety and for seeking the utmost degree in religion and this is not necessarily the case for the Muslim society. This is exactly like the case of wearing a veil, it is an obligation for the Mothers of the Believers, and a virtuous act for other adult females. There are some texts that hint at the legitimacy of shaking hands in case of need. The ruling in this case is a matter of personal judgment, and the two different schools of

thought are included within contemporary Islamic thinking.

## 106. Why should Muslim girls undergo circumcision?

Circumcision is a noble deed for women when it is necessary to be performed. It is an innate tradition to which the Prophet (peace be upon him) guided people. However, female circumcision is not obligatory. It is obligatory for men but not for women. It is counted as a good deed for women for whom it is necessary to be performed but there is no sin for she who does not undergo it. Al-Khilâl reported on the authority of Shadâd bin Aws (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said, ***"Circumcision is a sunnah (Prophetic Tradition) for men and a noble deed for women."*** The wisdom behind this act is to regulate sexual desires, that is why the Prophet (peace be upon him) ordered not to exaggerate in removing a part of the clitoris of (a female) for this would please the husband more and make her face more beautiful

## 107. Does Islam permit women to study?

Universities and institutions in Muslim countries are still crowded with men and women and I really could not say whether this is a question of someone living with the group in the current era or if it is a question from someone who migrated

and lived in solitude in a mountain path where he occasionally hears about what is going on around the world!

The religious texts that exhort seeking knowledge and elevate the status of scholars are addressed to both men and women. The Muslim nation has witnessed an uncountable number of female scholars and jurists. The books of translation and history are rich with women's knowledge and contributions. Some scholars made it a duty for women to migrate seeking knowledge in case of need. In this respect, Ibn Hazim (may Allah be merciful with him) said, "Women, like men, are obliged to travel to seek knowledge in religious matters. They are all obliged to know the rulings pertaining to ritual bathing, prayer, fasting, lawful and unlawful food, drinks, and clothing. There is no difference between men and women in this respect. Women should know the lawful and unlawful words and deeds by either depending on themselves, or by going to seek knowledge from scholars. It is an obligation for the Imam to exhort people to behave in this way." (Al-Ahkâm (Rulings) by Ibn Hazim: 1/413)

**108. If everything goes well in Paradise, why should men have a number of female companions with big, beautiful eyes while on the other hand, there is only one husband for each woman? Why is there a difference between men and women in this respect despite the fact that the problem of mixed lineage no longer exists in Paradise?**

Allah has guaranteed for men and women all that which would please them in paradise.

Almighty Allah says:

﴿ نَحْنُ أَوْلِيَآؤُكُمْ فِي ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَفِي ٱلْآخِرَةِ ۖ وَلَكُمْ فِيهَا مَا تَشْتَهِيٓ أَنفُسُكُمْ وَلَكُمْ فِيهَا مَا تَدَّعُونَ ﴿٣١﴾ نُزُلًا مِّنْ غَفُورٍ رَّحِيمٍ ﴿٣٢﴾ ﴾ (فصلت : ٣١-٣٢)

**Therein you shall have (all) that your inner-selves desire, and therein you shall have (all) for which you ask for. An entertainment from (Allah), the Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. (Fussilat, 41: 31-32)**

Almighty Allah also says:

﴿ وَفِيهَا مَا تَشْتَهِيهِ ٱلْأَنفُسُ وَتَلَذُّ ٱلْأَعْيُنُ ۖ وَأَنتُمْ فِيهَا خَٰلِدُونَ ﴿٧١﴾ ﴾ (الزخرف : ٧١)

**(There will be) therein all that the one's inner-selves could desire, and all the eyes could delight in, and you will abide therein forever. (Az-Zukhruf, 43: 71)**

Allah is the Creator, the All-Knowing. According to Allah's Wisdom, woman are satisfied with one husband only and man is satisfied with what he was promised. The number is of no consequence. It is a matter of the satisfaction that Allah grants to whomever He wills. Such issues have no rulings in the Qur'ân and Prophetic Traditions but Allah makes them known to us through His revelation. People exert a lot of effort to know the wisdom behind such a ruling, if they are guided to it, then they will feel ease at heart and if not, they should leave the whole matter to Allah, and accept His decision with complete submission.

## 109. Why are men granted a larger share of the inheritance than women?

First: This matter is not a general one, for Almighty Allah did not say, "Allah commands you as regards your inheritors to the male a portion equal to that of two females". Whereas He said,

﴿ يُوصِيكُمُ ٱللَّهُ فِىٓ أَوْلَٰدِكُمْ ۖ لِلذَّكَرِ مِثْلُ حَظِّ ٱلْأُنثَيَيْنِ ﴾ (النساء: ١١)

**Allah commands you as regards your children's (inheritance); to the male, a portion equal to that of two females. (An-Nisâ', 4: 11)**

Based on the above-mentioned Qur'ânic verse, the ruling of inheritance is not a constant one for all males and females in all cases. A thorough study of Islamic law will reveal

that the difference in shares is not based upon gender, but it is based on three criteria as follows:

1. The degree of kinship between the inheritor, male or female, and the deceased. A closer tie means a greater share.

2. The responsibilities of everyone are to be taken into consideration. He who is created to have more responsibilities and exert more effort should have a share greater than the one who is created to have lesser responsibilities, be it male or female. The daughter of the deceased inherits more than his mother, given the fact that both of them are females. The son of the deceased inherits more than his father, given the fact that both of them are males. The daughter of the deceased inherits more than his father in spite of the fact that the grandfather might be the origin of her father's wealth. The difference in shares has nothing to do with being a male or female, but it is a matter of responsibilities and obligations that necessitates a greater share for the one having more responsibilities and a lesser share for the more having less responsibilities.

3. In case of equal degrees of kinship, the criterion in this case is the difference in the financial burden of the inheritors, the duties and responsibilities of everyone. This is the only criterion that differentiates between the shares of males and females.

In this respect Allah says in the Qur'ânic verse:

﴿ يُوصِيكُمُ ٱللَّهُ فِىٓ أَوْلَـٰدِكُمْ ۖ لِلذَّكَرِ مِثْلُ حَظِّ ٱلْأُنثَيَيْنِ ﴾ (النساء : ١١)

**Allah commands you as regards your children's (inheritance); to the male, a portion equal to that of two females. (An-Nisâ', 4: 11)**

Man is responsible to sustain his wife and his children while his sister is to be sustained by her husband, who is to make adequate provision for her and for their children. Putting such a responsibility into consideration, we will discover that the female's portion, though inheriting half the share of the male, is greater than him for she is exempted from the burden and responsibility of spending and providing for the family.

Based on the above mentioned facts, the difference between the share of males and that of females is not a steady, general ruling, but it differs from one case to another as follows:

Woman's share of inheritance is equal to that of man as in the case of being a sister or a brother of a deceased who left neither ascendants or descendents. Almighty Allah says:

﴿ وَإِن كَانَ رَجُلٌ يُورَثُ كَلَـٰلَةً أَوِ ٱمْرَأَةٌ وَلَهُۥٓ أَخٌ أَوْ أُخْتٌ فَلِكُلِّ وَٰحِدٍ مِّنْهُمَا ٱلسُّدُسُ ۚ فَإِن كَانُوٓا۟ أَكْثَرَ مِن ذَٰلِكَ فَهُمْ شُرَكَآءُ فِى ٱلثُّلُثِ ﴾ (النساء : ١٢)

**If the man or woman whose inheritance is in question has left neither ascendants nor descendents, but has**

**left a brother or a sister, each one of the two gets a sixth; but if more than two, they share in a third."**

**(An-Nisâ', 4:12)**

In other cases, woman's share of inheritance is equal or less than that of man as in the case of parents. If the deceased left no descendants, the mother's share is one third and the father's share is two thirds. If the deceased left male and female descendants or if he left male descendants only, then the share of the father is equal to that of the mother. If the deceased left a female descendent, the share of the mother is one sixth and that of the father is also one sixth but the rest of the inheritance is to be in the father's share by agnation. Almighty Allah says in the Qur'ânic verse:

﴿ وَلِأَبَوَيْهِ لِكُلِّ وَاحِدٍ مِّنْهُمَا ٱلسُّدُسُ مِمَّا تَرَكَ إِن كَانَ لَهُۥ وَلَدٌ ۚ فَإِن لَّمْ يَكُن لَّهُۥ وَلَدٌ وَوَرِثَهُۥٓ أَبَوَاهُ فَلِأُمِّهِ ٱلثُّلُثُ ۚ فَإِن كَانَ لَهُۥٓ إِخْوَةٌ فَلِأُمِّهِ ٱلسُّدُسُ ۚ ﴾ (النساء: ١١)

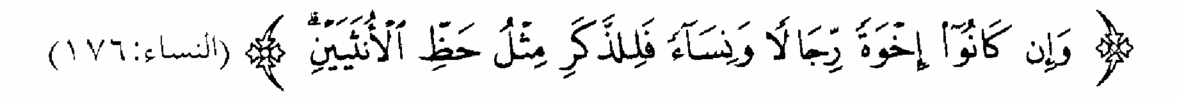
**For parents, a sixth share of inheritance to each if the deceased left children, if no children, and the parents are the (only) heirs, the mother has a third; if the deceased left brothers or (sisters), the mother has a sixth.** **(An-Nisâ', 4:11)**

Regarding children's inheritance, the male's portion is equal to that of two females as Almighty Allah says:

﴿ يُوصِيكُمُ ٱللَّهُ فِىٓ أَوْلَـٰدِكُمْ ۖ لِلذَّكَرِ مِثْلُ حَظِّ ٱلْأُنثَيَيْنِ ۚ ﴾ (النساء: ١١)

**Allah commands you as regards your children's (inheritance); to the male, a portion equal to that of two females. (An-Nisâ', 4: 11)**

As for the brother's and sister's inheritance when the deceased left no children, Almighty Allah says in the Qur'ânic verse what means:



**If there are brothers and sisters, the male will have twice the share of the female. (An-Nisâ': 176).**

**First:** Some scholars investigated the cases of inheritance for women and compared them to that of men; they made an amazing conclusion. There are only four cases in which the male's portion of inheritance is equal to that of two females, and there are a great number of cases in which woman's inheritance is equal to that of men. There are ten cases in which the share of woman exceeds that of man, and there are some cases in which women inherit with no prescribed share for man!

**Second:** The reason behind the double share of males is crystal clear. Men are obliged to carry the financial burden: starting from the marriage costs, the dowry, and the sustenance of the family. It is the responsibility of men to spend and provide the means of living for the family. On the other hand, women are not responsible for spending and they are not obliged to do that except voluntarily. That is why the scholars hold the opinion

that, 'The wife could give the obligatory charity to her husband for she is not obliged to sustain him, while the husband could not give the obligatory charity to his wife because the husband is obliged to sustain his wife.' In conclusion, the rights are granted according to the responsibilities.

## 110. Why does Islam make the witness of two women equal to the witness of a man?

This matter is not a general one, and we should scrutinize the issue from all aspects in order to realize the perfection of the Islamic Law and that the One who decreed this law is He Who gave to each thing its form and nature, then guided it aright.

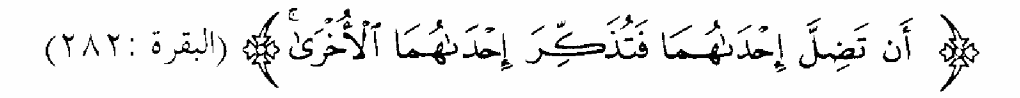
**First:** Islamic legislation made a distinction between means of protecting rights and means of confirming rights before court. The means of confirming rights before court are more varied than the means of protecting rights as stipulated by Islamic legislation. Rights could be protected away from the court and those with due rights could know that their rights are protected. On the other hand, the judge may pass a sentence that does not protect one's right and is totally unexpected by him. The Glorious Qur'ânic verse is addressed to people with due rights in order to guide them to the best means to protect their rights. Judges are not the addressed ones and they are not obliged to judge according to this ruling. According to Ibn Al-Qayyim, the verse is concerned with the means by which people with due rights could protect their rights, and it has nothing to do with the means of judgment or the sentence of the judge.

Almighty Allah has mentioned the means to protect one's rights such as seeking a witness, and He did not say that the judges have to abide by this witness. (I'lâm Al-Muwaqi'în by Ibn Al-Qayyim)

-The judge, under Islamic jurisprudence, passes his sentence according to what he feels to be just based upon judicial evidence and proofs. The judgment might be based on some criteria: the refusal to testify in court, the rejected oath, the testimony of one woman, the testimony of a group of women without the presence of a man, trailing, compurgation, drawing lots, ownership, eyewitness. In our times, the judgment might be based on the prints, the audio and video records when the judge is at ease with such evidences. Judicial evidences and proofs might vary but those with due rights are to protect their rights according to the guidelines of the Glorious Qur'ânic verse. Ibn Al-Qayyim referred to this valuable meaning in his book, "At-Turuq Al-Hikmiyyah fee As-Siyâsah Ash-Sharî'iyyah". Ibn Al-Qayyim quoted his Sheikh Ibn Taimiyah, asserting and supporting this meaning, to have said, "Legal proof in the legislation is synonymous with seeking and declaring justice. Sometimes the judgment is based on four witnesses, other times it is based on three. or two witnesses, one witness, the witness of one woman, the refusal to testify in court, one oath, or fifty oaths, or four oaths, or the eyewitness. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, ***"Legal proof is to be provided by the plaintiff."*** In other words, the plaintiff should show the evidence and proof

that support his claim. If his claim proves to be just, then a sentence would be passed for him to have his right.

**Second:** The case of woman's witness is related to her own nature. Almighty Allah says in the Qur'ânic verse (what means),



**So that if one of them (two women) errs, the other can remind her. (Al-Baqarah, 2:282).**

The verse provides the clear-cut answer for making the witness of two women equal to the witness of a man. The reason is to remind one another in case of doubt. Therefore, if a woman is wise, conservative, and faithful in religion her witness can absolutely be accepted in certain cases; in other cases only the witness of two women with a solemn oath by the plaintiff can be accepted.

That is why scholars explained in detail the judgment pertaining to the witness of woman in different cases as follows:

- Woman's narrations on the authority of the Prophet (peace be upon him): the narration of the Muslim woman is equal to that of the Muslim man. There are no reported cases in which the scholars rejected the witness of the woman for the very reason of being a woman or said that another woman should witness the narration.

- The cases in which woman is the only eyewitness: only the witness of woman is the accepted one in cases like that which is related to proving previous marriages, virginity, confirming birth, suckling, woman's bodily defects and so on.

- The criminal cases, namely that which are related to the prescribed penalty and retaliation: a woman's witness is not accepted.

- Financial cases: the witness of two women is equal to the witness of a man provided that this witness is confirmed. As to giving witness before the court, this matter is left to the judge for he could judge based on the witness of a man and two women, or that of two women, or that of one woman if he feels at ease with her evidence and she is just. Almighty Allah says:

﴿ وَٱسْتَشْهِدُوا۟ شَهِيدَيْنِ مِن رِّجَالِكُمْ ۖ فَإِن لَّمْ يَكُونَا رَجُلَيْنِ فَرَجُلٌ وَٱمْرَأَتَانِ مِمَّن تَرْضَوْنَ مِنَ ٱلشُّهَدَآءِ أَن تَضِلَّ إِحْدَىٰهُمَا فَتُذَكِّرَ إِحْدَىٰهُمَا ٱلْأُخْرَىٰ ۚ ﴾ (البقرة : ٢٨٢)

**And get two witnesses out of your own men. And if there are not two men (available), then a man and two women, such as you agree for witnesses, so that if one of them (two women) errs, the other can remind her.**

**(Al-Baqarah, 2:282)**

- The judgment pertaining to excluding the witness of the woman in cases of prescribed penalty and retaliation:

The reason behind this is to take the necessary precautions in such important cases and to protect the rights of the accused. Women by nature and function do not usually witness the disputes that might end up with a verdict of murder. . The delicate emotional nature of women lead them to be averse to the bloody scene and would most likely not gaze at the criminal while killing his victim. If it occasionally occurs to be at the place of crime, the woman hastens to turn away her look, escape, or she might close her eyes and become frightened and horrified. Women are known by these strong emotions that would definitely lead them to avoid looking at this sight and so be unable to recognize the persons or the places. This necessitates exempting woman from witness in such cases in order to protect the rights of the accused until either he is convicted or proven to be innocent.

- The judgment pertaining to making the witness of two women equal to the witness of a man provided that this witness is confirmed in financial cases:

The Qur'ânic verse gives us the clear and wise reason behind this.

- Almighty Allah says:

﴿ أَن تَضِلَّ إِحْدَىٰهُمَا فَتُذَكِّرَ إِحْدَىٰهُمَا ٱلْأُخْرَىٰ ﴾ (البقرة : ٢٨٢)

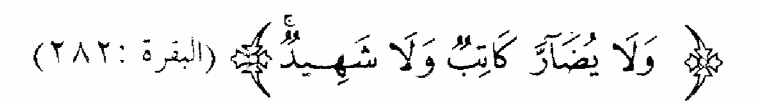
**So that if one of them (two women) errs, the other can remind her. (Al-Baqarah, 2:282).**

The first priority in the life of the Muslim woman is for her house, husband and children. When there is a necessity for women to work, they go to work while avoiding the prohibited intermingling with men except in case of necessary dealings. So, women are not likely to witness financial transactions, and all the quarrels and disputes that take place in this regard. Women by their very nature are shy to inquire about details or to participate in disputes. That is why her witness is to be confirmed by the witness of other woman provided that they are trustworthy and are quite sure of their witness. Protecting the rights of people, and seeking all means to confirm them is something to be added to the virtues of Islamic Law.

- Giving witness is not an advantage for the others to struggle about:

Finally, we would say that giving witness is not an advantage in itself . It entails many burdens and responsibilities so that some witnesses seek to escape giving testimony. The litigants interrogate the witnesses, sometimes they are calumniated. That is why the Qur'ân guided those with due rights neither to harm scribes nor witnesses.

Almighty Allah says:



**Let neither scribe nor witness suffer any harm.**

**(Al-Baqarah, 2:282)**

Witnesses are also told not to refuse to give witness when they are called for evidence.

Almighty Allah says:

﴿ وَلَا يَأْبَ ٱلشُّهَدَآءُ إِذَا مَا دُعُوا۟ ﴾ (البقرة : ٢٨٢)

**And the witnesses should not refuse when they are called on (for evidence). (Al-Baqarah, 2:282)**

Thus, exempting women from giving witness in some cases is for her own benefit, to save her honor and dignity from any harm that might be incurred upon her after giving witness.

## 111. What is the stance of Islam on slavery and what the right hands possess?

The issue of slavery is a recurrent one. Concerning slavery, first of all, we have to state that slavery is not an Islamic innovation. Slavery had been well established worldwide, and it was regarded as an economic and social currency before the advent of Islam. The Romans, Persians, Indians, and the Arabs in their pre-Islamic era are well acquainted with slavery. Islam did not introduce it , the following lines will tell you the contributions and innovations of Islam in this respect!

- According to the Romans, slaves are not human beings but they are classified as just non-living things. The source of slavery is the violent occupation with the aim of uprooting others and using them to the benefit of the Romans. The masters had the absolute right to kill their slaves or to torture them for no valid reason. The status of slaves in other ancient cultures is no better than that of the Romans. What are the contributions Islam introduced for slaves? Let us see the status of slaves under the aegis of Islam.

**First: The stage of emotional freedom:**

In this stage, slaves are treated as human beings and have their own rights. Islam states that slaves belong to the class of humans, and declares the sanctity of their lives and honor. According to Islam, slaves have the right to lead an honorable life, and to receive good and kind treatment. Allah has created all humans from one soul; they are created from a single person (Adam). They all belong to Adam, and Adam was created from dust. The masters and the slaves are one from another. Almighty Allah says in the Qur'ânic verse:

﴿ وَمَن لَّمْ يَسْتَطِعْ مِنكُمْ طَوْلًا أَن يَنكِحَ الْمُحْصَنَاتِ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ فَمِن مَّا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُم مِّن فَتَيَاتِكُمُ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ ۚ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِإِيمَانِكُم ۚ بَعْضُكُم مِّن بَعْضٍ ﴾ (النساء: ٢٥)

**And whoever of you have not the means wherewith to wed free, believing women, they may wed believing girls from among those (captives and slaves) whom**

**your right hand possess, and Allah has full knowledge about your Faith, you are one from another.**

**(An-Nisâ', 4: 25)**

The blood of slaves is inviolable. There is retaliation on the masters for killing their slaves. In this respect, the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) says, ***"He who kills his slave is to be killed in retaliation, he who mutilates his slave is to be mutilated in retaliation, he who castrates his slave is to be castrated in retaliation." (Agreed upon Hadîth)***

He who slaps his slave, its expiation is to manumit him. Muslim, in his Sahih, set aside a chapter on treating slaves, and the expiation of he who slaps his slave. Muslim recorded Abû 'Umar to have said, ***"I came to Ibn 'Umar after manumitting one of his slaves. He picked a stick or a like from the ground and said, 'Verily, by manumitting my slave, I have no reward, not even equal to this (pointing to the stick). I heard the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) saying, "He who slaps or beats his slave, the expiation of which is to manumit him"***

According to another narration, "Ibn 'Umar called one of his slaves and saw a scar on his back. Whereupon, Ibn 'Umar said to him, 'Did I hurt you.' The slave answered in the negative. Then Ibn 'Umar said to him, 'You are manumitted. He then picked something from the ground and said, 'Verily, by manumitting my slave, I have no reward, not even equal to this (pointing to the small thing he picked from the ground). I heard

the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) saying, "He who beats his slave for no valid reason or slaps him, the expiation of which is to manumit him.'"

Abû Mas'ûd Al-Ansây (may Allah be pleased with him) said, "***While I was beating my slave, I heard a sound from behind saying, 'O Abû Mas'ûd! You should know that Allah has more power on you than your power on your slave.' Abû Mas'ûd added, 'I turned and it was the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him). I said, 'O Messenger of Allah! He (the slave is free for the sake of Allah. Whereupon, the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said, 'Had you not done so, you would be burnt or you would be touched (the narrator is in doubt of the exact wording of the Prophet) by fire.'"***

According to another narration Abû Mas'ûd Al-Ansây (may Allah be pleased with him) is reported to have said, ***"While I was beating my slave, I heard a sound from behind saying, 'Beware, O Abû Mas'ûd!' But I could not determine the speaker out of my great anger. When he comes close to me, he turned out to be the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) and he was saying, 'Beware, O Abû Mas'ûd! Beware, O Abû Mas'ûd!' I threw the whip, whereupon he said, 'Beware, O Abû Mas'ûd for Allah has more power on you than your power on your slave. I said, 'I will never beat a slave of mine.'"***

Slaves and masters are brothers in Islam. Al-Bukhâry reported the Prophet (peace be upon him) to have said:

***Your slaves are your brothers whom Allah has made your right hands to possess, so he who has a slave, let him feed him of his food, clothe him from his clothes, and not to put on him a burden greater than what his strength could bear, and when he puts on him a burden, let him give him a hand." (Recorded by Al-Bukhâry).***

The relation between the masters and the slaves is that of the family which is based on close relations and ties. The masters of the female slave are her family. The permission of the masters is to be sought before the marriage of the female slaves as in the case of the free woman whose parents permission is to be sought before her marriage. Almighty Allah says:

﴿ فَانكِحُوهُنَّ بِإِذْنِ أَهْلِهِنَّ وَءَاتُوهُنَّ أُجُورَهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ مُحْصَنَٰتٍ غَيْرَ مُسَٰفِحَٰتٍ وَلَا مُتَّخِذَٰتِ أَخْدَانٍ ﴾ (النساء: ٢٥)

***Wed them with the permission of their own folk (guardians, Awliyâ' or masters) and give them their Mahr according to what is reasonable; they (the above said captive and slave girls) should be chaste, not adulterous, nor taking boy-friends. (An-Nisâ', 4:25)***

There is a lot of practical evidence for the new attitude that Islam introduced regarding slaves. The Prophet (peace be upon him) gave Zainab bint Jahsh, the daughter of his maternal aunt, in marriage to his freed slave Zaid bin Hârithah. After his immigration, the Prophet (peace be upon him) established the

bond of brotherhood between the Immigrants and the Supporters; he established the bond of brotherhood between his paternal uncle Hamzah and his freed slave Zaid, and he also established the bond of brotherhood between Bilâl bin Rabâh and Khâlid bin Ruwaihah Al-Khuthu'my. The last of the Prophet's deeds, is that he made Usâmah bin Zaid to carry the army banner and appoint him as a leader of the army against the Romans. Among the people of the army was Abû Bakr, 'Umar and Sa'd bin Abû Waqqâs! During the lifetime of 'Umar bin Al-Khattâb (may Allah be pleased with him) he gave a salary from the public treasury to Usâmah bin Zaid which is more than the salary he gave to his son 'Abdullâh bin 'Umar. When the latter talked with him about this study , 'Umar said to him, "Zaid was more beloved to the Prophet (peace be upon him) than your father and Usâmah was more beloved to the Prophet (peace be upon him) than you, and I preferred the Prophet's love to that of mine! 'Umar used to say about Abû Bakr, when the latter manumitted Bilal bin Rabâh in order to save him from the torture of his infidel masters when Bilâl embraced Islam, 'Abû Bakr is our master and he has manumitted our master!'

Islam stressed the importance of treating slaves in a mild, kind way to the extent that it prohibits calling the slaves or pointing to them by describing them as being slaves or in a way that makes them feel the humiliation of slavery. The Prophet (peace be upon him) says in this respect, ***"Let no one of you say, 'This is my slave and this is my female slave. But let you say, 'This is my boy and this my girl."***

**Second: the stage of real freedom**

Islam has made two means to achieve real freedom:: manumission and the contract of manumission.

The masters are the ones to manumit the slaves and this is to be a voluntarily act. Islam urges manumission and opens the way for it. It became widespread among the scholars that Islam is keen on manumission and urges people to follow such an act. Islamic Law makes it clear that he who manumits a slave is rewarded by being saved from the Hell Fire. Muslim recorded in his Shih that Abû Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated, "The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said, ***"He who manumits a slave, Allah would manumit for every part of the manumitted slave, a part of the manumitted from Hell Fire until he is saved from the Hell Fire."***

- In another narration, the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

***He who manumits a slave, Allah would manumit for every part of the manumitted slave, a part of the admitter's from Hell Fire, the hand would be manumitted for the hand, the leg would be manumitted for the leg and the private parts would be manumitted for the private parts." 'Aly bin Al-Hussein asked, 'Did you hear this from Abû Hurairah?' Said answered in the affirmative. Whereupon, 'Aly bin Al-Hussein said to one of his slaves, 'Call Martian.' When the latter came, 'Aly bin Al-Hussein said to him, 'You are manumitted for the sake of Allah." (Agreed upon Hadîth).***

According to Muslim, the slave who was manumitted by 'Aly bin Al-Hussein is Zaid bin Al-'Abiding where he took him as a slave for ten thousands drams. At-Timidly, Abû Umâmah and others of the Prophet's Companions narrated that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

***"When a Muslim master manumits a Muslim slave, the reward of which is that he would be manumitted from Hell Fire, for every part of the manumitted every part of the manumitter would be saved from Hell Fire. When a Muslim mistress manumits a Muslim female slave, the reward of which is that she would be manumitted from Hell Fire, for every part of the manumitted every part of the manumitter would be saved from Hell Fire."***

The Prophet (peace be upon him) started by manumitting his slaves. Many of his Companions took the Prophet as the best example and followed him in this respect. The Prophet (peace be upon him) has made manumitting a reward for he who teaches ten Muslims to read and write. He declared that Manumission is an expiation for many sins such as: unintentional murder, the separation between a husband and a wife when the husband likens his wife to a kinswoman unmarriageable to him, and violating one's oath. Making manumission an expiation for unintentional murder is for a wise reason. The murderer leads the society to lose a soul and by manumission humanity would be compensated by another soul. Slavery and death are equals. Manumission and life are equals. So, let him who commits an

unintentional murder, atone for killing a soul by reviving another through manumission.

The contract of manumission is to be concluded when the master agrees with the slave to set him free in return for a fixed sum of money. Islam exhorts to accept the contract of manumission when the slave asks for it and to help him to pay the debt. Almighty Allah says:

﴿ وَٱلَّذِينَ يَبۡتَغُونَ ٱلۡكِتَٰبَ مِمَّا مَلَكَتۡ أَيۡمَٰنُكُمۡ فَكَاتِبُوهُمۡ إِنۡ عَلِمۡتُمۡ فِيهِمۡ خَيۡرًاۖ وَءَاتُوهُم مِّن مَّالِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلَّذِيٓ ءَاتَىٰكُمۡۚ ﴾ (النور :٣٣)

**And such of your slaves as seek a writing (of emancipation), give them such writing, if you know that they are good and trustworthy. And give them something yourselves out of the wealth of Allah which He has bestowed upon you. (An-Nûr, 24: 33)**

Based upon this Glorious verse, masters are to accept the slaves request by giving them a contract of manumission if the slaves are known to be good and trustworthy. Masters are also exhorted to help the slaves by reducing part of the money that should be paid in return for manumission.

According to some scholars, accepting the request of the slave to have a contract of manumission is obligatory on the master. 'Atâ' was once asked, "Should I accept the contract of manumission knowing that the slave has the money to pay for his manumission?' Whereupon, he answered, 'I think that it is

an obligation.'" Anas bin Mâlik (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated that Ibn Sirîn wanted to have a contract of manumission but he procrastinated writing the contract. Whereupon, 'Umar said to him, 'You will accept to write the contract of manumission!' Ibn 'Abbâs (may Allah be pleased with him) said, "When a master has a good, trustworthy slave who owns a sum of money and seeks to write a contract of manumission, he is not permitted to refuse the slave's request."

The change of the slaves' conditions under the aegis of Islam is really great. Islam has delineated the road to terminate slavery. According to Islamic law, the sources of having slaves are restricted to legitimate war with the aim of upholding the Word of Allah. The Glorious Qur'ân refers only to two matters concerning treating prisoners of war: either generosity (free them without ransom) or ransom. The two roads lead to emancipation. However, Islam did not eradicate slavery for several reasons:

- Slavery is still an established system in all legislations. Islam came while people used to enslave prisoners of war or kill them. During the wars that took place between the Muslims and their enemies, the captives of the Muslims were taken as slaves, they suffered the severest torture, their blood and honor were declared as lawful. In such a situation, it was not suitable to abolish slavery from one side at the time in which the Muslim captives were severely tortured and enslaved by their masters. So, it was wise to keep this source of slavery in order to save the

Muslim captives by means of exchanging the prisoners of war. Slavery in Islam is totally different than that of any other system. Slaves under the shadow of Islam are respected human beings, they have their own rights, there is a retaliation against he who attacks a slave, and he who slaps his slave is obliged to emancipate him!

If the whole world community agreed to eradicate slavery, and there would be no danger of enslaving Muslims in case they became prisoners of war, then there would be no harm for the Muslims to accept this. The whole matter would be left to the judgment of those in power in the Muslim community.

Slavery, as a social system, pervaded in all societies to the extent that it became difficult to abolish it by merely issuing legislation. It took many years to prohibit drinking wine, so what about the more complicated and wide spread system of slavery? It is enough that Islam paved the way, opened the gates, and removed the obstacles of slavery during the lifetime of the Prophet (peace be upon him). Muslims are to follow the way according to these guidelines:

Slave girls have the rights that make them able to lead an honorable life. They are no longer publicly-owned slaves spreading vice and adultery in society. The slave girl is to be owned by one master, she has her own rights like that of human beings, if she gives birth to a male child from her master, she is freed at his death, she is not to be sold or granted as a gift, she is not to be inherited, the master could emancipate his female slave

and marry her if he so likes for which he would be doubly rewarded. In his Sahîh, Al-Bukhâry reported the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) to have said:

***"He who had a slave girl, then he teaches her in a better way, disciplines her in a better way, then manumits and marries her, will have a double reward.***

The Islamic Law exhorts giving slave girls in marriage if their masters are in no need of them. Almighty Allah says:

﴿ وَأَنكِحُوا۟ ٱلْأَيَـٰمَىٰ مِنكُمْ وَٱلصَّـٰلِحِينَ مِنْ عِبَادِكُمْ وَإِمَآئِكُمْ ۚ إِن يَكُونُوا۟ فُقَرَآءَ يُغْنِهِمُ ٱللَّهُ مِن فَضْلِهِۦ ﴾ (النور : ٣٢)

**And marry those among you who are single (i.e. a man who has no wife and the woman who has no husband) and (also marry) the Sâlihûn (pious, fit and capable ones) of your (male) slaves and maid-servants (female slaves). If they be poor, Allah will enrich them out of His Bounty. (An-Nûr, 24:32)**

In this way the difference between slavery in Islam and that of the contemporary nations is crystal clear. Female slaves, according to some systems other than Islam, were regarded as something publicly owned, they spread vice and adultery, sexual intercourse took place between the two parties only to gratify one's lust without any responsibility being taken.

# CONCLUSION

Thanks to these questions, we have examined different issues in different fields: religious, political, social and cultural. I think that we have not covered all the false allegations circulated by the giant and biased mass media in these countries. I strongly believe that we would not be able to do so, as long as Satan exists to tempt people and vain desires remain to beautify evil deeds. Doubts are increasing day after day. But, I hope that we have been guided to provide convincing answers to what had been raised by anyone who is seeking guidance and truth.

We assert that discussing doubtful issues and reaching convincing answers is a duty on the Muslim nation. Muslims are to argue in a way that is better and to invite mankind to the Way of their Lord (Islam) with wisdom and fair preaching. We should not lose patience when being provoked by an ignorant and stubborn attitude. The Prophet (peace be upon him) used to show more tolerance and patience when dealing with the ignorant and obstinate, he used also to presuppose good intentions. It is the duty of Messengers to convey the message in the clearest way, it is also the duty of the scholars and jurists who follow them. We say to those who fall into the trap of such questions, that inquiring is the right of anyone, but blind, false fanaticism does not beautify or upgrade anyone. Fanaticism is not a virtue or a right. He who calls for fanaticism is the one entitled to bear the result for he who closes his eyes will not harm the light, he is the only one to be harmed! Life would come

to an end and the soul would return to its Creator. People would come unto Allah alone as He has created them the first time while leaving behind them all that which Allah had bestowed on them. And on that Day, the followers of falsehood will come to know by which overturning they will be overturned.

We would like to conclude these questions by the words of Almighty Allah in the Qur'ânic verse:

﴿ قُلْ يَٰٓأَهْلَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ تَعَالَوْا۟ إِلَىٰ كَلِمَةٍ سَوَآءٍۭ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ أَلَّا نَعْبُدَ إِلَّا ٱللَّهَ وَلَا نُشْرِكَ بِهِۦ شَيْـًٔا وَلَا يَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُنَا بَعْضًا أَرْبَابًا مِّن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ فَإِن تَوَلَّوْا۟ فَقُولُوا۟ ٱشْهَدُوا۟ بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿٦٤﴾ ﴾ (آل عمران : ٦٤)

**Say (O Muhammad): 'O people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians): Come to a word that is just between us and you, that we worship none but Allah, and that we associate no partners with Him, and that none of us shall take others as lords besides Allah. Then, if they turn away, say: 'Bear witness that we are Muslims.'"**

**(Âl-'Imrân)**